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Three Poems

By John Freeman

I

THE DARK HOUR

"No, no! Leave me not in this dark hour,"
She cried; and I,
"Thou foolish Dear, but call not dark this hour:
What Night doth lour?"
And nought did she reply,
But in her eye
The clamorous trouble spake, and then was still.

O that I heard her once more speak,
Or ev'n with troubled eye
Teach me her fear, that I might seek
Poppies for misery!
The hour was dark, although I knew it not;
But when the livid dawn brake then I knew
How while I slept the dense Night through
Treachery's worm her fainting fealty slew.

O that I heard her once more speak
As then— so weak—
"No, no! leave me not in this dark hour!"
That I might answer her,
"Love, be at rest, for nothing now shall stir
Thy heart but my heart beating there!"

II

FIRST LOVE

Come back, come back—ah, never more to leave me:
Come back, even though your constant longing grieve me,
Longing for other kisses, hands than mine!
By all that's most divine
In your frank human beauty, come, and cover
With that deceiving smile the love your lover
Hath taught you, and the light that in your eyes
Tells of the painful joys that make your ruinous Paradise!

Come back! that so, upon the shining meadow
When the Sun draws the magic of your shadow;
Or when the red fire's gradual sinking light
Yields up the room to Night;—
Seeing you thus or thus, I may recapture
The very sharpness of remembered rapture.
So it may seem, by exquisite deceit,
You are yet mine, I yours, and Life yet rare and sweet.

Come back! nay, come not back now, come back never:
That day you went (I know) it was for ever.
I know you—how the spectre of cold shame
Would chill you if you came.
Lo, here first Love's first memory abideth,
Here in my heart the image of you yet hideth.
But though you came and Hope thrilled me anew,
First Love would yet be dead—O, it would not be you!

III

"NOT THUS I SEE YOU"

O, but what grace if I could but forget you!
You have made league with all familiar things—
The thrush that still, evening and morning, sings;
The aspen leaves that sigh
"My Dear!" with your true voice when I pass by;
O, and that painful 'lated flush of tender sky!
That minds me—and with sense too grave for tears—
Of those for ever dead, too-blissful years.

Yet 'twere a miracle could I forget you,
Since ev'n dead things, once sensible of you,
Yield up your ghost ;—as all the garden through
Murmurs each rose, " 'Twas she
Shook in her palm the dew that shone in me."
And on the stairs your recent footsteps echoingly
Sound yet again ; and each dark doorway speaks
Of you towards whom my sharpened longing seeks.

O that I could forget or not regret you !
Could I but see you as one sees a fair
Child under apple-burdened boughs that bear
Morn's autumn beauty, and
Seeing her seeth Heaven at his hand,
And all day sees that happiness beside him stand . . .
Not thus I see you, but as one drowning sees
Home, friends, and loves his very enemies !

The Wife

By Wilfrid Wilson Gibson

THAT night, she dreamt that he had died,
As they were sleeping, side by side :
And she awakened in affright,
To think of him, so cold and white :
And, when she turned her eyes to him,
The tears of dream had made them dim ;
And, for a while, she could not see
That he was sleeping quietly.
But, as she saw him, lying there,
The moonlight on his curly hair,
With happy face and quiet breath,
Although she thought no more of death ;
And it was very good to rest
Her trembling hand on his calm breast,
And feel the warm and breathing life ;
And know that she was still his wife ;
Yet, in his bosom's easy stir,
She felt a something trouble her ;
And wept again, she knew not why,
And thought it would be good to die—
To sink into the deep, sweet rest,
Her hand upon his quiet breast.

She slept : and when she woke again,
A bird was at the window-pane,
A wild-eyed bird, with wings of white
That fluttered in the cold moonlight,
As though for very fear of night ;
And flapped the pane, as if afraid :
Yet, not a sound the white wings made.
Her eyes met those beseeching eyes ;
And then, she felt she needs must rise,
And let the poor wild creature in
To find the rest it sought to win.
She rose and set the casement wide :
And caught the murmur of the tide ;
And saw, afar, the mounded graves
About the church beside the waves :
The huddled headstones, glimmering white
And ghostly in the cold moonlight.

THE WIFE

The bird flew straightway to the bed ;
And hovered o'er the husband's head,
And circled thrice above his head,
Three times above his dreaming head :
And, as she watched it, flying round,
She wondered that it made no sound :
And, while she wondered, it was gone :
And, cold and white, the moonlight shone
Upon her husband, sleeping there,
And turned to silver his gold hair,
And paled like death his ruddy face.
Then, creeping back into her place,
She lay beside him in the bed :
But, if she closed her eyes, with dread
She saw that wild bird's eyes that burned
Through her shut eyelids, though she turned
Her blessings over in her heart,
That peace might come ; and, with a start,
If she but drowsed, or dreamt of rest,
She felt that wild beak in her breast.
So, wearying for the time to rise,
She watched, till dawn was in the skies.

Her husband woke : but, not a word
She told him of the strange white bird :
But, as, at breakfast-time she took
The pan of porridge from the crook ;
And all was ready to begin,
A neighbour gossip hurried in,
And told the news, that Phoebe White
Had died in childbirth in the night.
The husband neither spoke nor stirred,
But, sat as one, who, having heard,
May never listen to a word
From any living lips again ;
And, heedless of the tongues of men,
Hears, in a silence, dread and deep,
The dead folk talking in their sleep.
His porridge stood till it was cold :
And, as he sat, his face grew old ;
And all his yellow hair turned white,
As it had looked to her last night,
When it was drenched with cold moonlight.

And she knew all : but never said
A word to him about the dead ;
Or pestered him to take his meat :
But, sitting silent in her seat,
She left him quiet with his heart
To thoughts in which she had no part ;
Until he rose to go about
His daily work ; and staggered out.
And, all that day, her eyes were dim
That she had borne no child to him.

Days passed : and then, one evening late,
As she came by the churchyard gate,
She saw him near the new-made grave :
And, with a lifted head and brave,
She hurried home, lest he should know
That she had looked upon his woe.
And, when they sat beside the fire,
Although it seemed he could not tire
Of gazing on the glowing coal,
Although a fire was in her soul,
She sat beside him with a smile,
Lest he should look on her the while,
And wonder what could make her sad,
When all the world but him was glad.
But, not a word to her he said :
And silently they went to bed.

She never closed her eyes that night :
And she was stirring, ere the light ;
And, while her husband lay at rest,
She left his side, and quickly dressed ;
And stole downstairs, as though in fear
Lest he should chance to wake, and hear.
And still the stars were shining bright,
As she passed out into the night ;
And all the dewy air was sweet
With flowers that bloomed about her feet,
Where he, for her, when they were wed,
Had digged and sown a wall-flower bed :
And on the rich, deep, mellow scent
A surge of memories came and went,
As, dreaming of the old, glad hours,
She stooped to pluck a bunch of flowers,

THE WIFE

To lay upon the flowerless grave
That held his heart beside the wave.
Though, like a troop of ghosts in white,
The headstones watched in cold starlight,
As by the dead girl's grave she knelt,
No fear in her full heart she felt :
But hurried back, when she had laid
Her offering on the turf, afraid
Lest he should wake, and find her gone :
And still the stars in heaven shone,
When into bed again she crept,
And lay beside him, while he slept.
And, when day came, upon his hair
The warm light fell ; and, young and fair,
He looked again to her kind eyes
That watched him till 'twas time to rise.
And, every day, as he passed by
The churchyard gate, with downcast eye,
He saw fresh flowers upon the grave
That held his heart beside the wave :
And, wondering, he was glad to find
That any living soul was kind
To that dead girl who died the death
Of shame for his sake : and the breath
Of those fresh flowers to him was sweet,
As he turned home with laggard feet,
Still wondering who could be her friend.

He never knew, until the end,
When, in the churchyard by the wave,
He stood beside another grave :
And, as the priest's last words were said,
He turned, and lifting up his head
He saw the bunch of flowers was dead
Upon the dead girl's grave ; and felt
The truth shoot through his heart, and melt
The frost of icy bitterness,
And flood his heart with warm distress :
And, kneeling by his dead wife's grave,
To her, at last, her hour he gave.

That night, she dreamt that he had died,
And they were sleeping, side by side.

Two Poems

By Francis Meynell

I

IRELAND

You who gave at my first demand
A love to my lips, a friend to my hand,
A soul, a song I could admire,
A cold night, and a warm turf fire ;
You who gave me more in a year
Than a hundred such would bring me here—
Ireland, take, if your proud heart can,
The homage of an Englishman !

The lights that climb the climbing hill
Claim kinship with two worlds of stars—
Those set in Heaven, and the still
Pools, and wheel-flashing city-cars.
Ah, stars and pools and city lights,
Ah, candid skies, more candid faces,
Like the still tumult of far places
You set this troubled heart to rights !

O love loss-manifest ! I prize
The beating heart of your sunset skies ;
Your patch-work fields ; the low-winged cloud ;
The voices, rich and not too loud,
That take some sweetness from the birds,
And music make of our Saxon words ;
The valley-cup, brimful of mist ;
A moon that's tender to be kissed ;
A wind-bent tree—ah, these and these
Are the things that move, and the things that please !

Ireland gave me more in a year
Than a hundred such would bring me here :
A love, a grief, a gaiety,
And a little of hating, it may be—
God of sinners, forgive Thou me !
And she never gave grief but she gave me a friend,
And so, I pray, will it be to the end.

With the game played, and the die cast,
—Have I played too little, or too fast ?—
Ireland, bury, if this may be,
Ireland, the laughter and tears of me.
Giver of love and weeping thereafter,
Ireland, bury my tears and laughter,
And take, yea take, if your proud heart can,
The life and death of an Englishman.

II

THE VICTORY

Her beauty was a God's and a man's undoing,
  Who both found Paradise in a girl's face ;
But God is strong in passion, and mighty was His wooing :
  He stripped her of life, and set her in His gaze.

Shall I ever near her when the night passes over,
  Meet her in the garden of the tarryings of God ?
She, the Bride of Heaven, will she know a human lover ?
  She, the Fruit of Paradise, a poor earth sod ?

O very brief His victory !—for when His voice of thunder
  Shall summon me forth to pay all the debt,
I shall see, I shall see, ere His sentence hurl me under,
  I shall see her and know her—and she will not forget !

Quick she'll leave her glories, quick her gaudy splendour,
  Lips afire, bare breast, and O her heart bare !—
And the Almighty God will utterly fail to bend her
  —Ah, what's a God indeed, if He's not loved of her ?

Hush—what is this ?—O hush ! Sweetness without measure—
  Her voice and His voice, one, of one accord :
" We are One and We are Love, I thy God am she thy Treasure ;
  Come, Our lover, come ! " My Lady—My Lord !

Androgynism ; or, Woman Playing at Man

From the Unpublished MSS. of the late Charles Reade

> Disguise, I see thou art a counterfeit
> In which the pregnant enemy does much !
> *Twelfth Night.*

WOMEN waste all their treasures ; bestowing their affections on men, their passions on bonnets, gowns, lace, and artificial flowers.

That barely exceeds the hard line of truth, yet one must not be over-cynical at the expense of a sex superior as regards the quality of passion, and far more lavish of heart to us than we to them. Not all feminine affection leaks towards and dribbles over unworthy objects, while in the records of the species even girls have been celebrated for cherishing ambitions just a little loftier than mere gewgaws. Many women, many minds ; many minds, many motives. For example, Madame du Barri may be cited as a cleverish sample of the feminine variety, and according to her the wisest of the sex is a Becky Sharp. " Thanks to the education you men-folk give us," she cries, " we learn to cheat you whenever we choose ; and the greatest fool of us can make you believe that black is white ! " Is the congenital *rôle* of womanhood to play a false part ? I don't admit half as much, nor a half-quarter, *pace* du Barri, and confessing to my own comparative sciolism ; but I do believe that some women have an overpowering itch for simulating. Among actresses, the androgyne, or woman-man, has figured not quite ingloriously in the pages of history. Pope Joan and Joan of Arc, the Chevalier d'Eon and Lady Hester Stanhope, occur haphazard to the recollection of the shallowest smatterer. Nor was this erratic ambition confined to Triple Crowns, chain armour, breeches, rapiers, slashed coats, three-cornered hats, and—pardon—trousers ; it extended from the vanities of the world to those of the cloister and included even the repulsive cowl of the monk. In the Harleian Miscellany there occurs a sprightly dialogue between a Protestant

and Papist, wherein I find quoted the noble de Mesueir, Marino, Euphrosyna, Eugenia, Pelagia, and Margerita, nuns who passed their lives as monks, and remained undiscovered until after death. These ladies are quaintly described as *mulieres habitum verilem mentite*, the successful players of a practical lie. That same offence, by the by, in merry mediæval England was made a hanging matter—provided always that the sinner failed to escape detection; it has served also, I remember, as the *motif* of a pathetic story in an old magazine. Protestantism and civilization show more lenient, our gibbet being only the moral *solvuntus tabula risu*.

Between the years 1858–62, *i.e.*, about the date when I first began to collect from real life material for the drama, instances of androgynism occurred, or were brought to light, with unusual frequency, and I devoted a folio of 250 leaves to tabulating them. Of these the vast majority possessed the quality of interest in the feeblest degree. The actresses were *naturally* masculine, sexual mistakes, physiological freaks. Their manliness, too, was almost virile. One of the ugly lot, a Miss Elizabeth Anne Holman, at 23 (the mother of two, but not in any state so positively feminine as wedlock), avowed that " she *would* wear men's clothes, and do man's work, though she should be transported for it." An allocution pronounced. I think, before the Mayor of Exeter. N.B.—Mayor, instead of punishing her, gave her money from the poor-box. Another of the same *genre* served long as a sailor; her excuse being a sickly husband. Here, however, the *sequitur* seemed rather hazy, doubts being cast on her willingness to contribute towards the man's support. Yet a third at Liverpool worked as a bricklayer, and for years posed as the lawful husband of another woman. Money lay at the root of that deception. She, *par ignobile*, made a good thing of it.

Such examples as these would not repay the price of pens and ink—for the purposes of dramatic narration. The androgynism of history may be over-coloured; fiction in tatters; but that of the police-courts palls miserably by reason of vulgar commonplace. Outside the broadest farce, a lady of the roadside clad in homuncular fustian would irritate the pit and empty the gallery. The subject appeared destitute of piquancy or pathos; in real life it refused to develop dramatically, and I had already dropped it in the middle of my folio, when a case was reported tinged with a little more colour, one, *me judice*, worth the pains of investigation.

It shall be told simply, as a slender illustration of the

aphorism, "Truth is stranger than fiction," or perhaps to throw a sidelight on that other and more ancient one, "*Quot homines, tot sententiæ.*" We shall get at the philosophy of the tale later on, after a few facts have been digested, and may, for aught I know, declare it to be one of those things in heaven and earth not heretofore dreamt of, an ethical solecism.

This is the story.

In 1853 a Cheltenham girl, Kate Tozer, being at the time half-way through her teens, lent a childish ear to the suit of a first cousin—brother once removed you may call him. Where kinship happens to be so close, the preliminary difficulties of courtship vanish. There is no ice to be broken, no male modesty to be mastered, no feminine nerves to be braced. Mr. Tom Coombe, in virtue of his cousinship, was entitled to benefit of mistletoe, a privilege asserted, no doubt, and admitted without a caveat. As for Miss Kate, just emancipated from short frocks, Tom's preference flattered her missish vanity just a little. The fellow was a good decade her senior, and withal earning regular wages as a painter. Playmates envied her—that meant much. Tom's mamma detested her—that meant more. To land this hungry fish was to take a rise above Mademoiselles Lizzie, Sally, Polly, *et cie*, and also out of Mrs. Coombe. She did it, and repented with fine promptitude, for her heart was not Tom's, no, not one half-inch of it.

Married in haste, Mrs. Kate's subsequent leisure seems to have been devoted to chronic differences with her mother-in-law. Tom, the immediate victim of these family jars, began slowly to perceive something rotten in the State of Denmark, but with more than marital inconsequence, set it down to the score of his fond mother, and hugged himself with the too-flattering assurance that if the girl and the woman were parted, domestic felicity would at once be his happy lot. Isn't that characteristic of the base ingratitude of offspring? The logic of an infatuated brain led this lout to cast unlimited blame on the mother who loved him truly, exonerating all the while the hussy who cared for him not one rush! On his side, at that time of day, affection teemed exuberantly—oppressively, Kate considered. No wonder. The chit was in her first youth, panoplied with what the French call the beauty of the devil. The rose downed on her delicate cheek, the cherry ripened a full lip. A pretty girl, and one, moreover, endowed with character. Tom's gentle passion in those early days may be deemed pardonable, though, ungrateful rascal, he did take sides against mother and conscience.

"Lack a day," sighed that sorrowing woman.

> A daughter's a daughter all her life,
> But a son's a son—till he gets him a wife!

Disillusion had been Kate's portion almost immediately after the parson and wedding-cake. Tom only escaped it by the simple process of looking purposely the wrong way; but the time came when he had perforce to obey the word of command "Eyes right!" Under the impression that Kate's humours, indifference, incapacity to settle down, were attributable to the fridging influence of a jealous mother-in-law, he resolved to make a break, and enjoy his Kate without alloy. Painters, he flatters his vivid imagination, must exist wherever there are houses—worse luck! Now the resort of what has been absurdly misnomered fashion, alias Anglo-India, *malades imaginaires* and malingerers, Monsieur Famish minus his rag and plus his half-pay, aristocracy out at elbows, and clerical Othellos whose occupation's o'er—some such human congeries constitutes a paradise for house-painters, and Benedict Tom, in deserting Cheltenham and regular Saturday nights, simply played the fool. But the man, I tell you, was in love, and *quare non habet ullus amor*. With the residue of his small savings—Kate and the draper had already bored a hole in the stocking—he took flight, bride, lares, penates, and all in search of work and luck.

On this novel line an unpleasant surprise awaited egotism and uxoriousness. At Cheltenham Kate's temper had varied from unaccountable incertitude to that degree of mobility which presages a possible storm, but may under favourable auspices terminate in the sweetest calm. It was only *coram* the mother-in-law that decided shirtiness developed itself and the little tongue became unamiably pert. On the tramp this important element in married life degenerated rapidly into peevishness, petulance, and a most uncomfortable candour. With what seemed to Tom the wildest inconsequence, Kate up and said to his face, for no other ostensible reason than that the lodging chanced to fall below her standard of elegance, that she wished she had never married him.

He forgave that ebullition, indulged largely in the venerable sophism, "*Non causa pro causa*," consoled his breast with the thought that she could not have meant it, and made a big effort to forget.

Alas, that was never a slip of the tongue. Once uttered it

soon became a formula, reiterated like the devotions of the rosary at intervals, and with provoking frequency.

He tried to put it down to spleen and contemplated a course of potash by way of corrective. Then one day she boxed his ears.

That must surely have been cerebral, cardiac, anything except splenetic ? It opened the man's eyes, and thenceforth he abandoned the insanely hypothetical, in favour of the simple categorical, method of reasoning. Sings Homer: "The gifts of enemies are no gifts." A buffet, of all love-tokens, must be the least gratifying to male *amour propre*. I think this infallible, and, better still, convincing method, remorseless and pitiless though it seemed to poor Tom, as most logic is, served him a good turn. It brought his soul down from the clouds. It dispersed the vapours wherewith weakness and vanity had involved an honest judgment. The revelation must have been bitter indeed, but it told, confound it! the whole truth. He had taken Kate, on the alternative system, for better or for worse. *Mutatis mutandis*, she had done the same by him. Result, an irreparable blunder—not the first of the sort, nor by any manner of means the last—on the part of Hymen. So here's a pair for you running in double harness, and yoked until death did them part—*vide* the ecclesiastical contract—yet badly matched, and the mare given to jib. The man's romance had perished and come to a fearful end, the girl's inclinations took a petty, vindictive turn. To rid herself of Benedict would be to starve, so she went on the tack, what can't be cured must be made unendurable. For many months a sneaking fondness for the rose and the cherry, the bright eyes and the saccharine quality of girlhood, rendered Tom complaisant. The ill-starred fellow forgave until a fresh provocation fridged the old sore. Thus, mutually uncomfortable and the victims of a gawky relationship, they jogged at angles along the path of life. Neither, if the picture itself looked ugly, was it set in a gilded frame. Work and wage in ornamental Cheltenham had flowed with admirable regularity. Both of these essentials in less highly civilized boroughs dribbled irregularly. The savings had long ago been absorbed by hunger or vanity, and Mrs. Kate's wardrobe consisted of precisely what she stood up in. In fine, after parading the eastern shires, Tom descended to the level of the unemployed, and one day these *misérables*—Victor Hugo applies to a parallel situation the epithet "ridiculous"—found themselves minus dinner. Awkward, very! Tom smoked a pipe and banqueted freely on a surfeit of philosophy;

Kate had a good cry, and seemed much relieved. Still, the vacuum bountiful Nature abhors remained unfilled, and Madam Kate's corsets ere they retired to rest had got to be absurdly loose.

The next day brought a job—and dinner. The day following no job, and the *débris* of yesterday's repast. Arithmetic showed plainly that their future would be compounded in equal proportions of fasts and feasts, the former slightly preponderating.

Now Mrs. Kate, being excluded from the category of those wives who love their lords, failed to fulfil the primary object, *teste* the Church of England, for which matrimony was instituted. She was, *bien entendu*, childless. On the other hand, the defaulting spouse indirectly atoned for her neglect of Tom by corresponding indifference to the entire male sex. If, as the honest fellow opined, she rated him infinitely below his real value, no rival appeared on the scene to arouse his jealousy. Not caring a button for her husband, Kate exhibited nevertheless a paradoxical fidelity. When Tom's mates came sidling up with sly glances and oily civilities, he observed with amusement how suddenly they recoiled. Minerva's face might be that of the competitor of Venus for the fatal apple, but her tongue was the tongue of the Gorgon. It would have required something much more lovely than Paris himself to take the change out of this candid young woman. In general, the sexes act and re-act on each other incomprehensibly. No male can understand how it comes to pass that Miss Beauty flings her priceless affections at the feet of repulsive Mr. Beast. No girl can fathom the mystery of what that nice man Mr. Paris can see in so odious a creature as Lily Venus. In Kate, however, you have the exception to this universal rule. Messrs. Paris, Adonis et Cie might exert all their strong magic, but on her eye and heart it fell absolutely flat. They attracted the girl not one whit more than poor Tom Coombe, her long-suffering husband. To put it plainer than that lies beyond the reach of my small art.

This will prepare you for the sequel. In our free country the daughters of artisans and small tradesmen, the class this young person sprang from, are carefully educated in incapacity. In their case the folly of being wise unto sewing, cooking, baking, butter-making, and other utilitarian accomplishments, is voted by their fond parents blissful. It was after a longish week of Sabbaths, consisting of alternative fasts fetched up by no particular feasts, that the girl suddenly

remembered her previous training in the school of negation, and it chafed her spirit. Tall, elegant, pretty-behaved—on the surface—no opening occurred for her except in the very lowest departments of manual labour. For a cut of the joint she did essay the scrubbing-brush—by no means altogether to her liking. For a saveloy and some hot poison she made trial of soap-suds. They or the saveloy, or the poison, very nearly brought on a fit of hysterics; and Tom, in a temper, swore he would rather go to gaol than repeat that experience. The worm at last turned.

That same evening—it was at Woburn—a journeyman painter from Bedford brought the gratifying intelligence that work was more plentiful than hands in that town. A big public institution being in course of erection, the contractor, after his kind, procrastinated, and had to hurry against time in order to save his skin. That was enough. Tom passed the word sharp, "Prepare to start!"

Kate, a woman now, for she was two years over age, and the hard life had replaced the maidenly *beauté du diable* by that variety of comeliness designated handsome, obeyed drearily. The perpetual Zingari motion had become chronic after seven long years, and habit is second nature. Yet her expression on receiving this command scarcely savoured of sweet content, rather, I think, of vile ill-usage, the look of one who walks perpetually in the teeth of a British east wind, and smarts under it. "I'll go as far as the post office to enquire for letters." "Right," says Tom; "don't be all day about it." So the lord lighted his pipe, and the lady marched off to the *poste restante*.

"Letters for the name of Coombe?"

"Yes. There you are, Miss."

They always called her "Miss"—perhaps because she looked the part.

A black-edged envelope—post mark "Cheltenham," an enclosure too, crispish, threadneedly, signed on behalf of the Governor and Company of the biggest and safest bank in Christendom. Bless that bank! Not to dwell on a mere detail, Aunt Mary had paid the debt of nature, and this was the good soul's legacy—a ten-pound note, duty free.

Kate regarded the whole thing, black edge, bank-note, Aunt Mary's blessing, with a dry eye, and a yet drier smile. The world had knocked the poor thing about a bit, and if there survived one germ of sentiment it lay deep below the surface.

There she stood, fixed, pensive, statuesque, on the steps of the Woburn post office for a long five minutes.

"Shall I?"

That was whisper number one, very *sotto voce*, and undecided.

"Yes. *I will.*"

That was whisper number two. Away scuttled the little feet like a hare from her form.

That pipe of Master Tom's smouldered under slow suction to a spark and went out. So long as it lasted Tom's brain slept in the stupor of nicotine. *Causa sublata tollitur effectus.* With the final whiff the cerebral functions reasserted themselves and a grumble ensued; then a growl; then a short sample of the dash dialect. Now dashes come home to roost, but don't bring back truant Kates. That being so, he lit another pipe and departed again into inanity.

Still Kate failed to put in an appearance, and the irritated, though otherwise nonchalant, husband, vaulted to the hasty conclusion that something must be wrong. *Omne ignotum pro magnifico*—when you have to wait.

He pitched his pipe on the table in response to this idea, smashed it, dashed it—verbally, stuck his cap on his head, and lurched towards the door to cannon vehemently, like Harlequin in the stereotyped pantomime, against a youth in tweed dittoes. "Now then!" yelled he, "where are you a-shovin' to? And what do you want 'ere?"

A laugh.

Then he stared, and, still staring, fell back a pace. "Why, Kate, what the dash——?"

"Dry up!" was the curt rejoinder, "I'm not Kate, I'm Fred. That's me, and you've got to recollect it."

"But what—? Confound the gal, 'tis rank foolery! However did you come by those togs? Dash my wig"—scratching his unkempt poll.

"Listen, Tom——"

Now before you give ear to Mrs. Kate, try to grasp the transformation. Two hours ago she sallied forth in seedy female attire, hat and feather, cloak and gown—you can imagine the rest. She stands now before her appalled spouse no longer to outward view feminine, but androgynous, sartorially epicene. Trousers, cut-away coat, smart waistcoat, natty cap, flowing tie, and shirt collar, the image of a very pretty fellow, and, to perfect the illusion, hair cropped *à la militaire.* The whole turn-out brand new, and by no means unbecoming.

"Listen, Tom," quo' she. "It takes the work of four hands in this country to keep two people. At your trade wages are high, but employment uncertain. Reckoning one week with another all the year round, you have to remain idle three days out of six. Now, if I can bring grist to the mill the wage will be doubled, and the pair of us may live pretty comfortably. I can't do the work of a charwoman and won't. I'm not up to a better class of woman's work, such as dressmaking. But my head is cool and steady. I can climb a ladder as easily as any man. It won't take me a lifetime to learn how to mix paint and use it. Tom, from henceforth I'm your son, Fred. Who knows us at Bedford? Never a human soul. Who will be a bit the wiser? Don't I look every inch a man?"

Tom scratched that pate of his again. "I saw a kiddy of the same cut at the theayter once," he replied. Good criticism that, for *Mister* Kate had overdone it. Her get-up was of the stage, stagey.

"The things will soon fit me, and I the things," she replied, "all except," with a writhe, "this cramp in my shoulder."

"Braces?" suggested Tom tentatively.

Il faut souffrir pour être beau. Kate had not before realised the one uncomfortable item in a masculine wardrobe—to the uninitiated, I dare swear, an awful revelation.

"Aye, aye," smiled Tom gravely, "braces do cut, though with your waist a belt would do as well, or better. But that ain't it. What'll the police say, Missus?"

"Nothing—unless you let the cat out of the bag by calling me Missus, or Kate, or old gal."

"I don't like the risk," growled Tom from the base of his larynx. "And I don't like missing my regular meals," retorted Kate. "'Tain't as though I was going to have a family. 'Tain't as though you and I was over head and ears in love with each other. 'Tain't as though you could afford to give me a sealskin jacket once in every two years, and a coach and pair to ride in. Besides, where's the harm? Why mayn't I wear what clothes I think proper, and——"

"Give out you're a man?" sneered Tom.

"Very well. I won't give it out. If anybody thinks I'm what my things bespeak me, that's no fault of mine."

"The magistrates wouldn't say so," was the prompt rejoinder. "I reckon they'd call it a practical deception."

"But," pleaded wily-tongued self-will, "I don't deceive *you*, dear."

So the man was silenced, and when—an unusual circumstance—son Fred in her novel character put up a pair of pretty lips to ask for a kiss, all opposition was conquered; indeed, of necessity, he became an accomplice in the fraud.

It was just as the journeyman had stated. Work was plentiful in Bedford, and a handy, experienced, well-behaved artisan of the type of Coombe much in request. His smart boy, Fred, was learning the trade and willing to assist him at something beyond "'prentice wages." They made a fair start, and ere long the quick fingers and keen perception of the 'prentice commanded the highest wage-rate. Thus the hare-brained experiment proved successful, pecuniarily, while to Tom's infinite relief, his eyes and ears being kept constantly well open, no one suspected Master Fred's sex. She played to gallery and stalls alike with infinite adroitness, acting, yet never overacting, her *rôle*—a model for those ladies of the theatre who when cast for a male part take extraordinary pains to avoid concealment of sex. In their pants they are nothing if not feminine; in their petticoats altogether the other way. The sex, I fancy, can act anywhere except on the stage—when it has a mind to. There may have been moments when Mistress Fred, wearied of ceaseless deception, secretly complained with Rosalind, "I could find in my heart to disgrace my man's apparel, and to cry like a woman. But I must comfort the weaker vessel, as doublet and hose ought to show itself courageous to petticoat; therefore courage!" Nevertheless, as transpired subsequently, her temperament assimilated easily with the adjuncts of the male. Mind, I am no advocate of this sham artisan, not so much as an apologist. She served me for a character-study, and if only the hussy had not chosen to deviate so widely from the lines of nature, might have formed a subsidiary element in a drama. Worse luck, the jade never rose above the poor level of vulgar eccentricity, except perhaps at the last. But I anticipate.

We behold now Master—no longer Mistress—Fred, esteemed by employers of the borough of Bedford as a capable artisan, drawing her wage every Saturday night, and glanced at askance by the maidens of their alley, for the down was not quite gone nor the cherry faded, and the eyes that of old had led poor Tom Coombe captive, could flash now and again with strange lustre. Apropos, the girls, after putting their little heads together, could not quite understand how it came to pass that the pretty boy, who had become an object of general interest,

elected to devote the whole of the happy day that comes between Saturday and Monday to the society of his papa—such an uninteresting creature, so staid, so stolid, so very unromantic. At last one of them, either less self-conscious or more forward than the others, after engaging Fred in conversation concerning trivialities, ventured timidly to put this question with childish innocence.

Fred blushed, stammered, almost slipped her lines. Remember, there was no prompter to give the cue.

Little Miss Nelly blushed in turn, and bethought her that Fred was the very most charming specimen of the hideous sex it had been a pretty maid's small fortune to encounter. In her rank of life boys, though doubtless desirable evils, are apt to offend by rudeness, roughness, and recurrent *bêtises;* good looks are disfigured by blotches; nature's manners lack a Vere de Vere repose. Besides, their stupidity provokes chronic resentment. They are gifted with a gawky knack of being forward when the unities demand reserve, and reserved when boldness itself would be charming. But here was a youth without a fleck. Only a painter's assistant and yet as sympathetic as a practised lady-killer. Down went the poor little heart before this beautiful thing as the corn before the sickle. Fred knew the sex by heart—none better—and finding herself, pants and all, laid siege to by sweet simplicity, first hooked her fish and then played it with professional dexterity. After a few weeks of what is technically known as keeping company, to Tom's explosive amusement, who voted the romance the hugest of jests, poor, pretty little Nelly Smith, an apprentice to the straw-bonnet manufacture, found herself madly in love with, *horresco referens*, a phantom, coat and trousers—*voilà tout.*

Had that been all, these words would not have been written. I have no heart to record a pitiful trick, a practical joke, at the expense of a dear little innocent girl. But here there enters an unexpected and most unaccountable element into the narrative. Nelly not only loved Fred; Fred also loved Nelly. Possibly the fictitious Fred may have begun this strange *affaire de cœur* in play, but the play soon developed into earnest on her side, no less than on that of her victim. Here we have, I grant, a phase of human emotion baffling analysis, and wholly escaping definition. *Honi soit qui mal y pense.* Minus the element of falsity it might have been as poetic, as exalted, as blameless as the love of David and Jonathan. But query, would it have been reciprocal? Would Miss Nelly have wasted a single heart-string on Mrs. Kate

Coombe, had that lady appeared in the regulation petticoat and corset ? Thus far, however, sweet Nelly imagined that pants make a man ; that in the arms of gentle Fred she was going to be rapturously happy for the remainder of her natural life. Love's young dream was wasted on an unworthy and impossible object. As for Kate, the naughty hussy revelled in a novel excitement. Marriage for her had proved a fatal blunder, a serious freak devoid of the slightest genuine romance. Since then life had sludged on somehow, with a husband for friend and protector but not for a lover. Overpowering instincts, as I have hinted, repelled her from the male sex ; though she had voluntarily taken a working place among those from whose very touch she revolted. Such a being—in whom it is not easy to recognise either womanhood or manhood—occupied a quasi-neutral position ; nevertheless, experience goes to demonstrate the absolute impossibility of the heart, even in the case of the congenitally epicene, being utterly impervious. Given a subject having affinity with its erratic pulsation, it will show itself as capable of deep sentiment as the rest of us. A passion wholly spiritual may be derided as unreal, and inconsistent with what philosophy terms our environment. It is, in truth, hybrid ; perhaps morbid ; perhaps insane ; yet not outside the region of recorded fact. That it must yield nothing more satisfying than Dead Sea fruit does not militate against its existence. Other and more material passions gather copiously that ghastly harvest. If I am called a fool for asserting that such a passion can scorch a human breast, I reply in the pregnant language of paradox, "*Credo quia impossible.*"

All this, however, rests on other authority than mine ; on that of the patient. You may regard Kate Coombe as a mere proletarian, content and eager to earn a day's wage in doing masculine work, as a creature, therefore, *ipso facto*, more or less unsexed, as an eccentric, brazen and brutal in her defiance of natural law, as a violatrix of the Mosaic rule ; but I who have seen her shed a tear and am acquainted with the story from beginning to end, can place something to the credit of her account. Anyhow, in this wild-goose chase the decoy was not really empty-hearted Kate, but sweet innocent Nelly with the face of an angel, the liquid eye of a cherub, and the *tendresse* of a seraph. It was all wrong, this romance, unnatural, and, worse still, smirched with deceit ; but wretchedly real, a wild growth of the erotic principle, partly atoned for—even in the eye of stern common sense—by

its unsullied purity. The wickedness of the affair was bound up in the well-acted lie and the consequent injury inflicted on confiding innocence. There it ended. With all her faults Kate remained to the last line of the chapter in essence a woman.

Nothing less than mischief, nothing more than misery, nothing enduring or hopeful could accrue from an entanglement which, however gilded by fierce sentiment, issued from base selfishness and deserved all the reprobation it received. I should blush to be suspected of advancing the faintest scintilla of apology for such monstrous perversity. This, however, stands out in bold relief as a unique instance of androgynism, where the part simulated merged in realism. Women ere now have married other women for filthy lucre. But here is a case of mad love on the side of the actress. In our analysis, therefore, I am of opinion we can well afford to be equitable and charitable; to admit the blend of pure metal with much alloy; not indeed to pardon, but to rate fairly a pitiful error. The wanderings of human souls have been as various as devious, yet perhaps never before in the history of the sex, certainly never in the records of androgynism, has one appeared more fatal or more foolish.

To comprehend the measure of its folly we must pursue the thread of the narrative. I give it much as it was presented to me on the spot by trustworthy witnesses.

Shortly after the courtship commenced between Mr. apocryphal Frederick and Miss actual Nelly Smith, the latter young lady shifted her abode to the house where the painter Coombe and his alleged son lodged. The days were spent *de rigueur* in bread-winning, Nelly's fingers plaiting straw while her imagination roamed where beloved Fred was smearing paint, the suit of dittoes draped by an apron, the short-cropped locks safeguarded from turpentine by a paper biretta. After the hours of toil, father, or to be more explicit, Tom Coombe, having made himself scarce in the direction of the "Red Lion," these lovers would sit down, like harmless tabbies, to the tea-table and muffin-worry, billing and cooing right pleasantly until such time as the closure of the Temple of Bacchus sent Tom home more or less happy. The pair, however, had to gather rosebuds with due diligence, for Nelly's parents—small people in the farming way—resided ten miles off, and when Papa Smith descended on Bedford to buy or sell on the Saturday, his custom was to take back in the cart, with the pigs and the week's provisions, his pretty daughter, who returned in due course to Bonnetopolis by the early train on Monday.

Saturday night, therefore, and Sunday, which, had the Fates been propitious, might have been given to Cupid, had to be religiously devoted by dutiful Miss Nelly to the practical observance of the fifth clause of the Decalogue. This inevitable hardship added piquancy to the courtship. Absence makes the heart grow fonder. Grotesque as it may appear, it is a fact that Kate, the simulatrix, grew wildly jealous of Nelly's father and mother, who not unnaturally commanded a proper share of their daughter's affections. The separation between Saturday and Monday galled this vehement lover, and when Nelly took a week's holiday—it was at hay-time—Kate conducted herself, with pen and ink, much after the fashion of a ramping lunatic. 'Tis a mad world, my masters, but not commonly quite so mad as this. Talk about the depth of feminine folly! Fathomless, one would say after perusing the following letter from one to another of the same charming gender.

Bedford, July 30th, 1860.

My Own Dear Nelly,—It is with an aching heart and a trembling hand that I write. I *promised*, and I take the *earliest* opportunity of fulfilling it. Oh, my Nelly, my Nelly, what bitter agony! If this pain is the fruits of loving, oh, that I had never loved, or that I had loved less madly! I did not think you could break *your* word. But I will not, do not, blame you, dear. I dare not think you will cease to love me, or think less of me, though you are not by my side. But, oh, this separation is dreadful. Surely my heart cannot bear it much longer. It is known only to myself and God what I now feel. Oh, my heart is worse than it has been at all. Oh, that it would cease to beat, and that we were *both* in a brighter and better land, where there will be *no more* parting, *no more tears!* Oh, my precious Nelly, never did you seem so dear to me as at this moment. Forgive, oh, forgive, if I spoke harshly to you. It was the lips and not the heart that erred. When shall I see you again, my precious one? Oh, do not stay from me, my heart is indeed desolate now, so desolate that I know not what to do or where to go; but I must do something to drown *this bitter agony*. I cannot write more, as my poor heart is so very bad. Heaven bless and smile upon you, my own heart's treasure, and may all good angels watch over and guard thee, my own dear one, is the sincere prayer of your affectionate and faithful, though unhappy,

Fred.

Write to me. Come to me soon. But send me a line or two by Deborah, to-morrow if you can. God bless thee, darling! No sleep to-night. Oh, God, it is dreadful! Love to all. I put in a piece of paper, my own precious one, because I thought it may happen that you had not a sheet of paper in the house. God bless thee, my darling, and, oh, may you be happier than I shall be. Oh, how shall I contain myself! I dare not say more, my poor heart is too sad. Heaven bless thee. My heart will hover round thy dwelling-place, my own dear Nelly. Give my love to dear Lizzie, mind; Heaven bless her, and come to me soon. A thousand kisses.

The piece of paper was not the only enclosure. *Frederica inamorata*, to whom sex appeared a matter of such unutterable indifference, ran off at a tangent into poetry, whether original, plagiarised, or simply copy does not appear. I incline to the last alternative from internal evidence.

Here it is. The lines jingle nicely, and would, I am assured, sing well to "Christy Minstrelsy."

My bosom breathes a fitful sigh,
  Wild rose perfumes the air,
The pigeon woos in dulcet tones,
  And life to me is fair.
Yes. All is exquisite I smell and see,
For I am thine, Nell. Thou art all to me!

The lark aloft is piping tunes
  Of gushing love and joy;
The mill-wheel's opalescent waves
  Fling kisses passing by.
Oh, all is exquisite I feel and see,
For I am thine, Nell. Thou art all to me!

The summer sun's entrancing rays,
  The endless ether's blue,
Are as the soul, so lily-pure,
  Existing but for you.
All, all is exquisite in air and sea,
For I am thine, Nell. Thou art all to me!

Though time will roll and age will come,
  'Twill work no change in me;
Nor clime nor season quench the heart
  That breathes alone for thee!
Birds, flowers and streams, the zephyr, ether's blue,
I still shall love because they tell of you.

Civility, we are told, is cheap; apropos, to define the object of one's passion a bird, a flower, a stream, a zephyr, and blue ether, all of a blow, is indeed one of those "tunes of

gushing love and joy" cheaper than free-trade itself. Androgynous sentiment, however, absurd as it is in essence, insane in its accidents, invites the critic to spare rather than squander sarcasm. For the poetaster answers exactly to the happy paradox "falsely true"; she went off raging into flowing iambics, but with grim earnestness. Every line of that most lunatical letter, every platitude of Movian art, was meant and felt. A strange problem in human emotion, truly! Strange assuredly from the human standpoint, for is it not a prime article of the universal ethical code that hysteria, if levelled at the opposite sex, justifies itself, whereas, if applied to an object of the same gender, it is abominable? Nevertheless, when the apocryphal Fred avowed in doggerel that the love she gave the real Nelly was, if warm, also pure, she had fact for her witness. The affair from end to end was egregious folly supported by detestable deceit, but for the credit of womanhood it steered clear of wickedness. I cannot believe for an instant that the passion so effusively avowed amounted to sheer dissimulation or callous hoax. Could Kate Coombe have kept the affection she had, in her male guise, created in the bosom of Nelly *after* revealing her sex, the veil could have been torn off at once. Nelly, however, not content with billing and cooing, angled promptly for a wedding-ring. A practical young lady, she wanted a pound of realism to an ounce of idealism. Courtship, if you please, for a period consonant with the unities; but beyond that—*business*. There seems a strongish probability that her steady adherence to the main chance may have been the origin of the heartburnings hinted at in the above poignant epistle. It was Mrs. Kate's line to avoid the point; Miss Nelly's, on the other hand, to revert thereto with fatal insistence, a state of perpetual love minus wedlock being by no means suited to the temperament of unsophisticated maidenhood of the type that goes to make simple Miss Nellys. Quite right, too. But for that, Doctors' Commons would starve and the registrar's office descend to the level of a sinecure, confectioners would lose their most paying customers, and the orange-blossom trade collapse entirely. In love, as in law, to keep to the point constitutes the beginning, middle, and end of success.

Of course Fred, in his assumed character of ingenuous youth, could but protest by all his, or her, gods that her, or his, intentions were honourable. To give colour to this asseveration, after some feeble dodging, she—otherwise he—consented to make the acquaintance of Smith *père* and of the not

less formidable Madame *Mère*, whose critical scrutiny may have severely tested the assurance of our Rosalind. These good people, as luck would have it, proved splendidly gullible. Parents, I suspect, unconsciously view askance male pretenders to a daughter's hand. Awkward queries will bob up to the surface of their understanding. Adonis is beautiful to behold, with an auricomous moustache and the figure of a wasp. His social status appears undeniable, his prospects roseate. But, pertinent—very, does he imbibe? Are his morals quite as perfect as his manners? Has he a heart otherwise than for falsehood framed? In the case of a female in trousers such doubts dissipated themselves. Fred's beauty seemed much too feminine to be inherently wicked; shallow ratiocination perhaps, but convincing to the unsophisticated intelligence. Drink was beside the mark, for he, or she, exhibited a wild craving for tea, an admirable appreciation of crumpets, and an affection for such simple edibles as Norfolk and Suffolk dumplings—the special luxuries of East Anglia. Money, there being none on either side, did not enter into the question, pro or con, so the entire Smith family took kindly to Nelly's young man. Mamma avowed herself charmed with the natural vivacity wherewith he, or she, imprinted kisses on her staid and decorous lips. Papa professed that Fred was a warm-hearted chap, because he, or she, smacked him on the back and called him "Gaffer." Lizzie, the less attractive of the two sisters, indulged in agonies of jealousy, magnified to blubbering point after a couple of kisses from Fred's inconstant lips. Sam, the young brother, voted Nelly's spoon a wonner, on the strength of a judicious *douceur* of bull's-eyes, but the lad's appreciation dwindled when he discovered that Fred exhibited a reprehensible lack of enthusiasm for such manly pursuits as pig-killing, robbing nests, and rat-catching. A brother-in-law who failed in these particulars seemed to his adolescent judgment "soft"—a quality not in favour with the rustic hobbledehoy. For all that, Sam admitted that Fred was good company, and buried his objections in the recesses of his puerile bosom, to be disinterred later on.

If any one circumstance could have rendered the incongruity of the situation intolerable and embarrassing, it was the overweening affection developed by the confiding Smith family for their Nelly's sweetheart. Nothing short of a corresponding warmth would preserve the unities. That Fred could play up to his, or her, part may be inferred from this sprightly effusion launched at Madam Smith in the joint names of Fred and

Nelly, the caligraphy and jerky style being those of the former, person and number mixed.

Bedford, July 30th, 1860.

Our Very Dear Mother,—You see I am not gone yet, and shall, I hope, have the pleasure of seeing you and dear Father once again. I hope you will both try and come on Thursday. We shall *all* be very happy to see you, and we want you, dear Mother, to remain over Sunday, or if you could make it convenient to stay the week we should be *very, very happy*, and I am *sure* we would *do all in our power to make you comfortable;* so do try and stay, there's a *dear, dear* Mother. I am happy to say Nelly is quite well. With our kindest love to dear Lizzie and Sam,

Believe us to remain,

Your ever affectionate children,

F. and N. Coombe.

P.S.—Would it be too much trouble to ask you to write a line and tell us what train you will come by, and then we will meet you at the station ? Father's *love to all. God bless you!*

The allusion to an imminent move gives a hint of the real truth—viz., that matters had gone too far. Nothing could have been simpler than for the pair of Coombes—not Nelly, who was here impudently given brevet rank—to levant, and be heard of no more. Such was the wish of "father," alias husband, grown fairly wearied of all this imposture. But Fred's sentimentality remained at fever-heat. A row was to be avoided, and Bedford had got to be rather a warm locality for people in so egregiously false a position. Still, to part from Nelly would be too painful, so another trap was laid for that unwary young lady, Tom being not merely accomplice, but almost principal. "Father" gave out that business of paramount importance would take him to London, that son Fred must accompany him, and that they must start forthwith. The job at Bedford was completed. True, another job might have been secured. But the horror of an *éclaircissement* haunted honest Tom Coombe, and on the subject of "tracks" he remained firm. It was at this harrowing juncture that Fred, with tears in his, or her, voice and eyes, implored Nelly not to abandon him, or her, and poor little innocent Nelly at once declared her readiness for anything, however romantic.

In brief, they cajoled this pretty fool into deceiving her parents, into concealment where none was apparently necessary, into a course of ungrateful and undutiful conduct, incomprehensible in so simple a soul.

The London "lay," as they have it in "Cockaigne," was sheer fakement. They were not going to town, but they persuaded Nelly to pitch in that tale to her fond relations. To crown all, they invented as their London address No. 9 Sloane Street, a highly improbable place of residence for a journeyman painter. But how should Bedfordshire rustics know that? The plot took some little time to mature. Nelly herself, for all her ardour, rather recoiled from what must have appeared, even to an immature understanding, a heartless and useless piece of deception. Fred, however, seems to have dropped a broad hint that it must be that or an end of the whole affair. Nelly had gone home for a few days, and seems to have shown some irresolution when relieved of Fred's magic spell and under the wholesome influence of her parents. *Ergo*, Madam Fred consulted her complete letter-writer, and sent several shots after her, not without effect, as the event proved. Here is No. 1:

My Own Beloved Nelly,—I was glad, indeed, to receive your precious letter and your beautiful flowers. Bless thee, they are as fresh as though they were just gathered. But oh, my Nelly, how lonely, how sad I feel! Deborah says I don't look like the same, I look so ill. In truth, I feel ill. I have not closed my eyes for sleep these two nights. Oh, that I were dead! As regards my going, we think of going on Saturday week, and *what we spoke of shall be as you wish*, if we can see you between now and Sunday so as to arrange things, as I dare not trust our plans in a letter. You can come on Saturday, or, if not, come on Sunday morning and return in the evening if you cannot stay longer. Surely you can manage to do that? Or if you will do neither, if you will walk for three or four miles on the Bedford road we will meet you there on Sunday, if you will say what time you will be there, so that we could have a few minutes with you. You must tell me which it is to be, my own precious darling. But come, oh come, to the one who so madly yet so fondly loves you! Do not let me ask in vain, only be *cautious*. Keep a still tongue, my darling. I feel so dreadfully unhappy I cannot sit, and my side is very bad. I do hope you feel better, dear. But let me entreat you to come—*Saturday*, if you

cannot before. If you do not, you cannot do as we so much wish ; you understand, dear. I could say a deal more to you, my own heart's treasure, but my heart is so heavy. I will only hope you are well, and more happy than I am. God bless you, precious one ! Forgive this horrid scribble.

Good-bye, darling. Oh, think, I could give you one kiss ! Father sends his best and kindest love to his Nelly. Once more let me implore you to come. It shall cost you nothing, my own idolised darling. Love to all.

Do you remember last Saturday you said, " I am not gone, and I will not leave you " ? Oh, my Nelly, you are not here now ! Oh, God, what, oh, what shall I do ? Oh, if you love me, do not leave me desolate !

I shall send this by post, as you will get it as soon. God bless thee, *dear*, *dear* Nelly !

A thousand kisses.

FRED.

(*To be continued*)

Our Modern Vocabulary

By Logan Pearsall Smith

The materials for an historical study of the English language, the gradual emergence among us of a vocabulary suited to modern needs of expression, have hitherto been somewhat scanty and difficult of access. But now, with the partial completion of that great work, the *Oxford Dictionary*, whose editor, Sir James Murray, with his army of over a thousand readers, has carefully searched for many years the records of the language, and has traced, as far as is humanly possible, each new word to its first appearance, a great body of new and accurate information is made available for the student. As the Dictionary has now passed the letter R, and accomplished three-fourths of its task, it is already possible to make some estimate of the value and importance of this new information. Much of it can only be fully appreciated by those who are learned in the science of philology, but there is even more that is of profound interest to the lover of history and literature; and although it would require many volumes, and not one short essay, to do justice to this rich harvest of learning, it may be perhaps worth while to note a few points that have particularly impressed one reader of this fascinating work.

The first thing that strikes one is the perpetual change that is going on in the English language. We all know, of course, that new discoveries are continually being made, and new inventions, and that these need and find their names; but we are apt to think that, apart from this, language is something fixed and stable, handed on unchanged from generation to generation. We do not sufficiently realize, unless we have made a special study of the subject, that any living language like English is in a perpetual process of transformation; that old words die, or change their meaning, that countless numbers of new words arise; that we do not speak or write the English of our parents, still less that of our grandparents; and that our descendants will certainly speak a language very different from ours. But this Dictionary teaches us how large a part of the modern vocabulary of writing and conversation is of

quite recent origin, and was utterly unknown in the time of Shakespeare, or even at a later date. Let us then imagine a contemporary of Queen Elizabeth come to life again, and our attempts to enter into conversation with him. If we began by speaking of politics, and mentioned the "crisis," he would think we wished to discuss some terrible disease, or some sinister conjunction of the planets; and the words we should have to use in our attempts at explanation, the Prime Minister, the Cabinet, the Government, the Opposition, the Majority, party politics, and Reform, would convey to him either nothing at all, or meanings grotesquely different from our intention.

If, then, to change the subject, we should ask him if he were interested in literature, we should again have to explain, if we could, what we meant by "interested," and what by "literature"; as neither of these words could have been used as we use them before the middle of the Eighteenth Century. Nor would he know what we meant by novelists and dramatists, editors, reviewers, publishers, genius, originality, realism and romanticism. Nor could we talk with greater ease about history, for eras and epochs, the Middle Ages and Feudalism, or even a phrase like the Sixteenth Century, would convey nothing to his ears. The word Elizabethan was not used until Coleridge invented it, and the "Renaissance" only came into our vocabulary about sixty years ago. About art or business it would be almost impossible to speak, for our artistic or commercial terms are for the most part very modern; and should we at last fall back in despair on the subject of the weather, although we might get on more successfully, we should yet have to explain what we meant by a breeze, by atmosphere, by "fine" weather or "brilliant" sunshine.

Apart from new inventions and new discoveries, there are a number of causes for this perpetual change in language. In the first place words get worn out, all the vividness and expression fade from them, and new words must be found to do their work. Other words, fine and beautiful words, are struck by a strange sentence of death, and slowly die away, or only lead a ghostly kind of life in the archaic language of poetry. Take for instance words like *tarry*, *abide*, *raiment*, *blithe*, *cleanse*, *quench;* these are all good old words, familiar to us all, and yet for some reason they are dying, and probably none of us have ever once used them in conversation. But the main cause of this process of change is to be found in human nature itself—our language changes because life changes; and if we do not talk like our ancestors, it is because we are not

the same kind of people. Speech is the garment of human thought, of human nature; and like human nature a part of it is stable, moving slowly or not at all, while another part is undergoing a perpetual process of transformation. If then we compare the Elizabethan and our modern vocabulary, we shall be struck at once by certain obvious differences between the Elizabethans and ourselves. Their words are, with their thoughts, definite and concrete, ours generalised and abstract. Even to their abstract terms, Time, Law and Nature, they give personalities and almost visible forms. They lived in a world of men, trees and houses, of towns and green fields; we have made our melancholy habitation in a universe of agriculture, municipalities, of humanity, progress and reform.

Another change that will strike us at once is the growth of "self-consciousness" in modern times. Again and again we find that words formerly used only in what we call an "objective" sense, to express the qualities and powers of things, have come, little by little, to get a "subjective" meaning, and to describe the effects of things on us, on our own feelings and sensations. To *depress*, to *amuse*, to *entertain*, to *divert*, to *embarrass*, have all acquired new meanings in this way; nouns have arisen describing moods and states of feeling—*dissatisfaction*, *chagrin*, *disappointment*, *listlessness*, *apathy*, and with them have been invented adjectives like *boring*, *amusing*, *interesting*, *charming*. These adjectives are all of them quite modern words; *amusing* in its current sense dates back no further than Disraeli's *Vivian Grey*; *boring* is still more recent; *interesting* as we use it first appears in Sterne's *Sentimental Journey*, while Addison was the first to use *charming* without the old sense of magic or incantation.

So life, and with it language, has changed in the past, and so it will change in the future; and we may be sure therefore that the process of word-creation will never cease, and that, if any one of us should come to life three hundred years hence, he will find it as hard to understand the English of that day as it is for our imagined Elizabethan to comprehend our speech.

How do these new words arise? Each one, of course, is due to the action, conscious or unconscious, of some individual; they do not grow out of the earth, or fall on us from the sky. The question of the origin of new words divides itself into two parts, the philological and the historical. We are all more or less familiar with the first part, the methods by which new words are added to the language, either by borrowing

from a foreign language, or by adding to (or sometimes shortening) English words, or even sometimes by the creation of new roots.

But with the historical part, when our new words were made, and who made them, we are less familiar; and here our Dictionary provides us with some direct, and a very large amount of indirect information. It tells us in the first place about a number of words that are known to have been deliberately created. It shows us a Dutch chemist inventing *gas;* Jeremy Bentham, who was a great experimenter in language, in the act of making the word *international;* Huxley labelling himself an *Agnostic*, Coleridge apologetically suggesting the verb to *intensify*, and confessing himself guilty of having coined *aloofness*. We see Macaulay making the word *constituency;* Sterling scolding the incorrigible Carlyle for *environment*, and other of his numerous formations; the Master of Trinity, Whewell, coining the word *scientist*. *Cyclone* and *anti-cyclone*, *Eurasian*, *exogamy*, *folk-lore* and *hypnotism*, besides a whole list of more strictly scientific terms, are among the Nineteenth-Century words that we know to have been deliberately created.

Most words, however, never possessed, or have soon lost their birth-certificates, and it would seem at first sight impossible to discover how they arose. If, however, we make from the Dictionary a collection of post-Elizabethan terms, we cannot help being struck by the fact that a very large number of our most expressive and beautiful words are first found in the works of certain great writers, and seem to bear, in many cases, the mark of being their own creations. Of course, we can never know for a certainty, unless he states it, that the author has created the new word which is found for the first time in his writings. He may have heard it in conversation, or he may have derived it from some as yet undiscovered source; all we can be sure of is that the word was created, or at least became current, at about the time that it made its first appearance in print. If, however, we find, among a number of contemporary writers whose works yield few or no new formations, one to whom hundreds of new words are traced; if these are learned words, not likely to be used in conversation; and if, moreover, they seem to bear, like the coinage of a king, the stamp of the author's personality impressed on them, then surely there is at least a strong presumption in favour of the belief that he made or borrowed them himself. Let us, for example, take the instance of Sir Thomas Browne. In 1646 he published that odd and

interesting book, the *Pseudodoxia Epidemica;* and although his other works are not lacking in new formations, this book contains them by the hundred, and has probably given currency to more words in the English language than any one book since the time of Chaucer. And these words are almost all just the words that we would expect him to create, long, many-syllabled words derived from the Latin, and often expressive of his own musing and meditative mind: *hallucination*, *insecurity*, *retrogression*, *precarious*, *incontrovertible*, *incantatory*, *antediluvian*—the complete list would fill a page or more of this Review, and would be sufficient proof of my contention that a writer like Browne makes for himself a large part of his own vocabulary. And it is a proof, moreover, of his genius for word-making that many of these new creations—words like *medical*, *literary*, *electricity*—have become quite indispensable in modern speech.

Many new words are found also in Milton's writings (the greater number of them in the *Paradise Lost*), words like *dimensionless*, *infinitude*, *emblazonry*, *liturgical*, *ensanguined*, *Circean*, *anarch*, *gloom*, *irradiance*, *Pandemonium*, *bannered*, *echoing*, *rumoured*, *impassive*, *moonstruck*, *Satanic*. Surely these words, too, bear the stamp of his own coining, and proclaim themselves the offspring of his genius.

In Shakespeare's plays, partly owing to their immense popularity, but more I think to his unequalled sense for language, more new words are found than in almost all the rest of the English poets put together; for not only is our speech full of phrases from his plays, but a very large number of our most expressive words are first found in them. And in Shakespeare we find that rarest and most marvellous kind of word-making, when in the glow and fire of inspiration some poet, to express his thought, will venture on a great audacity of language, and invent some undreamed-of word, as when Macbeth cries:

> No, this my hand will rather
> The multitudinous seas incarnadine;

where *multitudinous* and *incarnadine* (as a verb) are new words; or where Romeo speaks of the "yoke of *inauspicious* stars," Lear of "the great *opposeless* wills" of the gods, or Prospero of "The *baseless* fabric of this vision," "the *cloud-capp'd* towers," and "this *insubstantial* pageant." For the adherents of the Baconian theory, I would suggest a comparison of the words invented or made current by the author whom they

would find in Shakespeare's place, words like *acid*, *emit*, *extensive*, *co-ordination*, *financier*, *manufacture*, *aperient*.

Spenser did much to enrich the language, both with new words, and with the revival of old ones, and the age of Elizabeth was in general a great period of experiment in word-formation. The works of many of the Elizabethans, more especially Nashe, Greene, and Chapman, abound in new formations; but their creations had not for the most part the gift of life, they never became current, and their authors must be classed among what we may call the eccentric word-makers, who love innovation for its own sake, and invent and use new words, not because they are well-formed or necessary, but simply for the sake of novelty and oddness. The Seventeenth Century provided many writers of this kind—men like Bishop Hall and Bishop Montague, the philosopher Cudworth, and, above all, Henry More the Platonist, who almost created a language of his own. But even these eccentric writers seem to have performed a certain service to the language, for while the greater part of their outlandish creations were allowed to die, a fairly large number of their experiments were found useful, and adopted into current English.

No such excuse, however, can be urged for perhaps the most eccentric of them all, Bishop Ken, who formed an odd vocabulary by adding the Latin prefix *co-* to nouns and verbs and adjectives as his fancy took him. *Co-living*, *co-transpiring*, *co-effluential*, *co-abide*, *co-hellish*, are instances enough to discourage a whole Bench of bishops; and since his day this branch of episcopal activity has been almost completely abandoned.

Of the secular writers of this period Evelyn and Robert Boyle, to judge by the new words found in their writings, did perhaps the most to enrich the language. Boyle contributes many scientific terms; while Evelyn, who felt, as he states in his diary, the need for the importation of foreign words, seems to have naturalised a number of terms belonging to the vocabulary of art, or descriptive of the ornaments of life. *Outline*, *attitude*, *contour*, *pastel*, *monochrome*, *balustrade*, *cascade*, *opera*, are among these new words, and of older words used in new and modern senses may be mentioned "manner" as opposed to matter, "avenue," "corridor," and "Gothic" architecture. Dryden's works contribute many new words, and a large number of French phrases were imported by the Restoration dramatists; and with the reign of Queen Anne came a new enrichment of the language. Many of our commonest expressions are traced to Addison, to the *Spectator*,

or to Swift's writings, *egotist*, *boyhood*, *prudery;* and "fun" and "refinement," "alert" and "clever" as we use them now. How far we have travelled from the great and solemn word-creations of Sir Thomas Browne and Milton! It is another age that needs its vocabulary, and finds its authors to provide it. Pope's list of new words is the longest in the time of the early Georges; of later writers Fielding, Sterne and Gibbon were not word-creators; but Dr. Johnson, in spite of his declaration that he had rarely used a word without the authority of a previous writer, would seem, if we are to judge by the *Oxford Dictionary*, to have added a considerable number of learned words to the language.

It is not, however, till Burke that we find a really authentic word-maker, and it is to Burke that we owe apparently a considerable part of our political vocabulary, words like *colonial*, *colonization*, *diplomacy*, *federalism*, *electioneering*, *expenditure*, *financial*, *municipality*, and our modern use of "organization," "representation" and "resources."

The rise, at the end of the Eighteenth Century, of the Romantic Movement made a demand for words not needed in the previous century. This took, for the most part, the form of the revival of old and obsolete words, like *chivalrous*, which Dr. Johnson had described in his Dictionary as out of use. Sir Walter Scott was the greatest of these word-revivers, and when we meet with fine old swashbuckler's words like *raid*, *foray*, *onslaught* and *derring-do*, they are very likely to come out of his poems or the Waverley novels. *Fitful*, which had once been used by Shakespeare in the phrase "after life's fitful fever," he also revived, and *bluff*, and *lodestar; gruesome* he introduced from the Scotch, and the romantic word *glamour*, which is derived from *grammeyre* (another of his revivals), and meant, in the Middle Ages, grammar learning, the study of Latin, and thus in ignorant minds soon acquired, like philosophy, a magical meaning. Does not this list of words show how very different is the mental atmosphere of this age from that of Queen Anne?

Both Coleridge and Southey were great experimenters in language, and both almost equalled the Seventeenth-Century divines in their odd, learned and outlandish formations. But among Coleridge's strange words, *esemplastic*, *crumenically*, *evenomate*, etc., we may attribute to the poet *dateless* and *greenery*, and to the philosopher and critic *pessimism*, *phenomenal*, *Elizabethan* and *anachronism*.

Wordsworth and Shelley have not contributed much to

our modern vocabulary; indeed, the few new words found in their writings belong more to the class of what we might call "drift words," products of the time, but plainly not created by the authors in whose works they make their first appearance. The "culture" and "comfort" and "gushing" in their modern use, which are traced to Wordsworth, and "inane" in the sense of silly, for which Shelley is made responsible, are hardly to be called words characteristic of these great poets.

Keats, who, in his love of unusual words, showed often more enthusiasm than taste, was nevertheless a genuine word-maker. It is true that of the many old words he revived, few or none have become current, and some of his own inventions, like *aurorean*, and *beamily*, are not happy creations. But the poet who could find such expressions as winter's "pale *mis-feature*," "*globed* pæonies," linen "smooth and *lavendered*," and who made a new use of the verb "to bloom" in the following line,

> When barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day,

must plainly have had a genius for word-creation, and would have done much, had he lived, to enrich the English language. And Keats, like Milton and Shakespeare, possessed that rare gift of the great poet, the power of creating those beautiful compound epithets which are miniature poems in themselves, *deep-damasked*, for instance, and *dew-dabbled*, and the nightingale's *full-throated* ease.

After Keats the faculty for word-creation shows a remarkable decline, and, with the exception of Carlyle, the harvest of new words from the works of the other Nineteenth-Century authors is a poor and scanty one. Tennyson's compound epithets, like *evil-starred*, *green-glimmering*, and *fire-crowned*, are sometimes beautiful, and we owe to him, apparently, *Horatian*, *moonlit*, *elfland*, and *fairy-tales*. But Tennyson cannot be claimed as a great word-creator; and still less can be said for Browning, whose odd formations like *crumblement*, *febricity*, *darlingness*, *motherkin*, *artistry*, *garnishry*, can hardly be considered valuable additions to the language. Browning, too, had a fondness for making adverbs by the somewhat slipshod method of prefixing *a-* to nouns and verbs, as in *a-joint*, *a-shine*, *a-sprout* and (Heaven help us!) *a-yelp*. Mrs. Browning followed suit with *a-strain* and *a-tremble*, Swinburne with *a-flower* and *a-flush*. Is it not a just cause of reproach to our Victorian poets, that almost their only additions to the language of imagination were made on these easy terms; especially when we

consider that in France the writers of the same period, following the example set by Ronsard and his school three hundred years before, wisely and consciously set about enriching their language, and one of them, Victor Hugo, created as many as fifteen hundred words ?

In Carlyle, however, the Victorian era possessed one great word-creator, one who could treat language with the audacity of the old writers, and, like them, could fuse his temperament into a noun or adjective, and stamp it with his image. *Croakery*, *gigmanity*, *Bedlamism*, *grumbly*, *dandiacal*—would any one but Carlyle have invented words like these ? He had a genius for nicknames, his " pig-philosophy " and " dismal science " are still remembered, and his eccentricities and audacities would fill many pages. But his contributions were not all of this personal character ; like Sir Walter Scott, he introduced words like *feckless*, *lilt* and *outcome* into England out of Scotland ; and a number of current words like *environment* and *decadent* are traced to his writings.

Of more recent writers, Rossetti, Swinburne and Pater seem to have scrupulously avoided new formations, and George Meredith only to have indulged in occasional oddities like *gaspy*, *hymnification*, *hugeousness*, *hushedly*. As for living authors one searches the Dictionary in vain for any serious contributions to our vocabulary. *Disillusionized* and *fair-minded* are traced to Lord Morley, *freakiness* to President Roosevelt, the use of " flamboyant " in the sense of florid to Professor Dowden, and a small number of odd words to Rudyard Kipling. And yet all this time, and all during the Nineteenth Century, at least twenty new words have been added every year to our current speech.

A list of some of these Nineteenth-Century words will perhaps be of interest, and enable us not only to get some notion of the character of the period in which we live—to catch the *Zeitgeist*, as it were, on the wing—but also to learn something about the nature and general quality of our new vocabulary. These new words, I must first explain, are divided into two classes—new formations, or old words used in a new sense ; but both may be considered for our purposes new words—our " motor," for instance, has become an entirely different word from motor as applied by the Elizabethans to the tenth sphere of the heavens, or to God, the Prime Motor, or by a poet to his lady's eyes. However, in the following list I print the new formations in ordinary type, while the old words used in their new and modern sense are given in italics.

To begin, then, our review of the century's changes, as mirrored in its changes of vocabulary. In the years between 1800 and 1810 names were found for the following personages: the alarmist, the diner-out, the parvenu, the autocrat, and the scapegrace, and they, with the aid of the *police*, taught the new-born age to rotate and galvanize, to legislate, centralize and signal, and inaugurated this great epoch of modern civilization with *dementia* and *dog-carts* and *introspection*, with hysteria, *freemasonry* and dress-suits, with bibliomania and melodrama, dahlias and reaction, with autobiographies, *culture*, pyjamas, *tact*, *oilcloth*, gelatine and *romance*.

The next decade, beginning with 1810, learnt to mystify, to boo and placard; it saw the middle-class with *reporters*, newsboys and diplomatists arrive; they brought with them dressing-cases and kaleidoscopes, pauperism and biology, delirium tremens, Brahminism, *co-operation*, misprints and platitudes, pessimism and hairpins. These, in the next ten years from 1820, were followed by experts and acrobats, by archæologists and dressmakers, mammals and millionaires, who lunch, gallivant, nag, and carry alpenstocks, who introduce the adjectives *amusing*, journalistic, rollicking, anthropomorphic, Byronic and tailor-made; they bring with them coal-scuttles, from which, as from magical cornucopias, they pour on us monographs, hay-fever and fire-insurance, *free-trade*, neuralgia, cabs, omnibuses, restaurants, limelight, curl-papers and moral courage. But our debt to Boers, the obscurantists and the Puseyites of the following decade, from 1830 to 1840, is even greater. From them we learn to gyrate, to loaf and bowdlerize, to use such words as *décolleté*, Dantesque and bosh, *doctrinaire* and decadent, *æsthetic*, archaic, *creepy*, flirtatious and hard-boiled. Their gifts included *railways* and Bright's disease, photographs, dentistry, feudalism, neck-ties and benzine, conservatism, Christmas-trees and jobbery, dress-clothes, paraffin, prayer-meetings, Socialism, crinoline and rocking-chairs.

By 1840 we are well entered upon the great early-Victorian period, and now the scientist, the dipsomaniac, the Pre-Raphaelite, the Mormon and the sightseer teach us the adjectives optimistic, cosmopolitan, *impulsive*, materialistic, plucky, *cosmic* and donnish; they endow us, moreover, with sanitation and bureaucracy, four-wheelers, footnotes, cigarettes and hypnotism, Communism, overcoats, orchids, and accordeons, postage stamps, folk-lore and electric light, Anglicanism and blandness. In the next ten years, beginning from 1850, from detectives, educationalists, Aryans and co-respondents, we

learn the adjectives inartistic, giottesque, mauve and idyllic; and we are enriched with kerosene and Positivism, the Anti-Macassar, the *Absolute* and the demi-monde, ironclads, *knickerbockers*, the Broad Church and the hold-all, croquet, æstheticism and cub-hunting, free-love, *disillusion* and *perambulators*.

Again, the wheel of time is turned. The altruist, the Pan-Anglican and the kleptomaniac instruct us, from 1860 to 1870, to gush and interview; they come bearing with them chromo-lithographs, heart-disease and Home Rule, dynamite, good form, garden-parties, bowler-hats and boredom. But life in this rich period was not even then complete. In 1870 the agnostic and the *realist* arose; they were followed by the bicyclist, the deer-stalker, the house-agent, the art-critic, the Jingo, who introduced polo and massage, diamond weddings, phonographs, School Boards and gasolene, lawn-tennis, megaphones, linoleum, roller-skates and the Salvation Army. Surely that was enough! But the generations, like the daughters of the horse-leech, still cry for more. In the next decade from 1880 appear the æsthete, the *crank* and the globe-trotter, the muddler, the mugwump and the impressionist, and their contributions to our complex civilization include dress-improvers and the Referendum, microbes and Cunarders, boycotts and *blizzards*, cordite and the County Council, crêches, gramophones, matineés and the fashion-papers, Faith-Cure, Collectivism and Gladstone bags. For the last twenty years, beginning with 1890, our records are more scanty, the great Dictionary was now well under way, and many new words, such as automobile, appendicitis, *bridge* and hooligan have arisen since the publication of the earlier volumes. But the records are sufficient to show that our generation, too, will leave, as the poet exhorted us, footprints in the sands of time. Tariff Reform and hair-restorers, pragmatism and the roadhog, criminology, megalomania, the kodak, the Imperialist, the pianola and the suffragette, these are among our contributions to the richness of the English language.

Now, without indulging in undue pessimism, I think we cannot help noticing a certain amount of deterioration when we compare this list of modern words with the word-creations of the past. In the first place we notice how many of these words are dull and abstract, and how many of them are foreign and unassimilated to English in their form. Then, in the second place, what a lack there is of fine and imaginative words! How can this be explained? Why is it that the great Nineteenth Century, full as it was of energy and creative power in other ways,

has left such a sorry record behind it in the way of language? Probably we are not yet in a position to give an adequate answer to this question; the period is not remote enough for us to judge it in due historical perspective; and the whole question of word-creation has been as yet so little studied, that we have no reliable criteria on which to base a sound judgment. I should like, however, to suggest, in a tentative way, two possible causes for this phenomenon—the immense activity of men of science as word-makers on the one hand, and, on the other, the inaction of our men of letters. Now it is well known that men of science are the very worst of word-makers, and, indeed, the natural enemies of language. For language, either literary or colloquial, demands a rich store of living and vivid words—words that are "thought-pictures" and appeal to the senses, and also embody our feelings about the objects they describe. But science cares nothing about emotion or vivid presentation; her ideal is a kind of algebraic notation, to be used simply as an instrument of analysis; and for this she rightly prefers dry and abstract terms, taken from some dead language, and deprived of all life and personality. These words are, of course, a necessity for science, and it would be ridiculous to fight against them. But their frequent importation into the language is accompanied by certain dangers, against which it would be well to be on our guard. We find in the first place that the jargon of science is becoming less and less restricted to scientific objects; the Greek affixes, *archi-*, *pseudo-*, *mono-*, *ortho-*, *proto-*, *-ism*, *-astic*, &c., are not confined to the museum, or laboratories, where they properly belong, but escape abroad and tend, like alien weeds in English rivers, to choke and supplant the appropriate and familiar growths of native origin. We find, too, that owing to the continual importation of unchanged foreign terms, the assimilative power of English is declining, and less and less do we seem able to naturalize our borrowed words and give them an English appearance.

But what is more disquieting is the poverty of our Nineteenth-Century native formations, the absence of fine and imaginative words. This, indeed, is the most serious part of the whole matter. Ugly words can be dropped, and are constantly dropped, out of the language; but if good ones are not created, their absence can never be made good. And the blame for this must surely rest, in part at least, on our men of letters, who have left unfulfilled their duty of providing their age with expressive names for its new experiences.

Two forces, one making for innovation and one for conservatism, are always at work in human speech; and it is the right balance of these forces that maintains the language in a healthy state, enabling it to change with changing needs, and yet not to change too fast. Both conservatives and innovators are therefore necessary; but it is our predicament that our innovators are the worst of word-makers, while our conservatives are the very ones to whom the task of innovation might most safely be entrusted.

This conservatism of literary men (although traces of it appear earlier) really dates from the Eighteenth Century, when it was believed that English could be made a permanent and stable thing; when Swift issued his proposals for fixing the language, and Dr. Johnson declared that it was adequate for all our needs. It has been increased by the growth of education, the publishing of dictionaries, the fear of critics and of proof-readers, and by the activities of a certain class of amateur philologists, who, with the newspapers at their service, attack new words, often with more animosity than discretion, and do their best to drive the poor things out of the language.

This conservatism is, moreover, partly due, I think, like so many of our mistakes, to a modern and false metaphor, to the belief that language is an " organism " with a natural growth of its own, which no conscious effort of ours can affect; and we forget how much has been done in the way of creating or changing language by the deliberate action of writers in the past. But probably the main reason why we dislike new words is because we so seldom now come on any about which we can feel enthusiasm. Our great Victorian writers, with the exception of Carlyle, left, as I have said, this task to others; most of our recent words being poor words, we come to associate newness with ugliness, and refuse to judge new words by their merits. Thus we find ourselves in a vicious circle; the fewer good new words there are, the fewer will be created; until, like Hazlitt, we come to regard the coining of words as a crime akin to that of the counterfeiter.

And yet, since there must be new words, why should not those who take an interest in the language give some attention to this need, and not leave it to others less gifted for the task? " Those who hazard innovations," a German reformer tells us, " do not set up for law-givers in language; they only exercise a right which every good citizen, in a free state, is eager to exercise—that of drawing public attention to a project of reform, the rejection or adoption of which he contentedly

abandons to the general will, to the suffrages of the majority of the literary public." We can but make our suggestions; if they are not accepted, no harm is done; while if we make a happy hit, the credit of adding a vivid and useful expression to the language is not one to be despised. We should be grateful, for instance, to anyone who would give us an equivalent for the German *Zeitgeist*, of *Schwärmerei*, or for the *Blüthenzeit* of an artist's career, as it is but rarely that German words can be comfortably naturalized in English.

Equally obvious is the need for simple English words to replace uncouth and outlandish expressions. Some of these have already been found: *ear-trumpet* for the original *acousticon*, and *lawn-tennis* for the first appellation *sphairistike*; and the *Times* has recently won our gratitude by making aviators give way to airmen. We still need, however, a simple word for cinematograph, and a better word for anti-cyclone; for it is surely ungracious to describe so benign a phenomenon by so uncouth a name.

Other words that need replacing are those that are not necessarily uncouth, but are inaccurate or misleading descriptions of the things they describe. History, and the experience of each one of us, will provide instances in plenty where the lack of a precise nomenclature has been the cause of barren controversy, and the first need of any policy is a rightly descriptive name. A new word, for instance, is badly needed in politics to replace the antiquated and somewhat ambiguous word Reform, which dates from the time when the change of out-of-date laws, and the abolition of unjust privileges, was the main duty of enlightened legislators; but which inadequately describes what is now the main task of modern politics, the wise application of new knowledge to social conditions. Labour Exchanges and invalidity insurance are not Reform—if they are not Reform, what are they? Reform, moreover, is a dangerous word for progressive politicians; Tariff Reformers and Municipal Reformers must have shown them how it can easily be used to give a popular appearance to reaction. A word, say, like "construction" or "constructivism," the "constructive" or "constructivist" party, would be a less ambiguous and more correct appellation, and would, moreover, gain no small advantage by the suggestion that the policy of its opponents was "destructive."

Even more important are the cases where there is no word at all for the thing that we are anxious to discuss. It has, for instance, been lately pointed out how much criticism suffers

from the lack of a term to distinguish between the æsthetic and the commercial branches of the arts, between writers, painters and musicians who satisfy æsthetic demands and obey æsthetic laws, and those who cater for other natural and legitimate, but non-æsthetic, needs. By calling these, as we must at present, bad "artists," an undeserved stigma is laid upon a deserving and useful class of producers. And, curiously enough, what is one of the most fundamental antagonisms in modern thought is without a name—the conflict, I mean, between the ideals of "qualitative" or "quantitative" civilization, between those who would subordinate everything to the ideal of "intensive" culture, and those who are willing, for the sake of spreading education and enlightenment, to sacrifice, if necessary, their highest manifestations.

The above instances of needed terms will show, I hope, that word-invention is no matter of mere curiosity and dilettantism. It is a matter of direct importance to all of us, and deserves the thought and care of those who have at heart the interests of civilization. Until a name is found, needed distinctions cannot be discussed, nor difficult and pressing problems settled. At the Congress of Berlin in 1885, as Mr. Graham Wallas has pointed out, the invention of a few new terms, "effective occupation," "hinterland," "sphere of influence," in place of the old and absolute word "sovereignty," did much to prevent a European war. Other difficulties will arise, or have arisen, for the solution of which appropriate terms will be equally necessary; and our civilization is now and then enriched by new thoughts and new ways of feeling, which may, if unnamed or wrongly named, soon fade from human consciousness. Shall the satisfaction of that want be left, as hitherto, to chance; or will our writers give a little attention to the matter, and, following the example of men of science, but with more consideration for linguistic and human needs, supply their age, like their great predecessors, with elegant, perspicuous and expressive words for its new thoughts and experiences, as they arise?

Letters of Wagner to his Schoolfellow, Apel

Translated by William Ashton Ellis

26

(Addressed to Leipzig as earlier. *Post-mark : Frankfort*, 24. *Aug.* 1835.)

FRANKFORT, *the* 21*st Aug.* 1835.

MY THEODOR,—Certainly I'm on the point of coming to Leipzig myself and seeing and speaking with you, yet I don't know how else to ward off the incessant grief and dread assailing me,—I must write you to-day,—this very hour. Tears pour from my eyes, as in my boyhood when I had sinned against someone I loved, and had to beg for forgiveness.—My Theodor, whither have I drifted? Whither has fled that free fair vital zest, in which we used to fire one another's spirits? Whither that future toward which we proudly strove in confidence of victory?—Maybe *you* have retained it all,—eh, developed it only still finer;—I know not,—for it's half a year since we knew aught of each other,—but I presume so,—I hope and—I wish it!—You have found a better friend,—a friend you can respect more,—prize more,—who is bound to be more to you than your old Richard!—O, for very tears I cannot go on writing; —— why this softness, to boot!——

I've been to Teplitz again, Theodor, and kept a mournful anniversary.—I was also at Prague again, where I spoke with the sweethearts of Ct Baar and Bn Bethman,—whom we once knew under the names of Jennie and Auguste.—I was at Carlsbad, too;—ah, and also at Wurzburg;—in the meantime my lass has lain in; a lout of a peasant had been my fortunate rival. Theodor, Theodor,—how Luck has deserted me ever since you left me! O, but a single hint that Fortune is fond of me still, and I will endeavour to get fond of life again. Everything, everything has vanished from me;—all poesy flees before me, and a vile naked prose stretches its endless length in front of me!—My God, it is to me as if my last flower of youth were disappearing, as if that chill Life were enshrouding my temples like a frost, to keep away all warmth and love!—O should I already have enjoyed whatever I was destined to enjoy? Was that my life?——Ay, ay, I've sinned;—and yet, I haven't! Can one sin when he's demented?—I have fallen out with my family, and must regard our relation as ruptured;—I myself brought it so far! I no longer know Leipzig; never shall I tread its streets again for any length of time! A Mother who heartily loves me, is all I still have there,—nothing beyond!—Theodor—have I still a friend? Do

I still possess your love, your confidence ?—O tell me, tell me,—how do you think of me ? To have lost so noble, grand a heart as yours, means much,—for me, to have lost everything ! If even you could misjudge me !—and by God, Theodor, it would be nothing impossible ;—it needs an infinite tenacity on your side, not to be deceived about me from your standpoint.—Ah, and I must feel it, and yet be pointed back to you alone !—Should *you* take leave of me, Farewell dear world !———

Ah, what a relief,—I've had a thorough good cry ; it is long since I've been able to ;—my tears have gushed forth like a splendid refreshing thunder-shower after protracted heat and drought. Now I'm somewhat calmer, and also mean to write you more composedly.—I have made a great mess of my life hitherto ;—dearest chum, I haven't been bad,—I've been insane ; it is the only expression I can find for my conduct,—it was a conventional [*sic*] madness ! Now I see only too well that Money's no chimera, no sordid, worthless minor matter ;—I have arrived at the conviction that Money has now acquired flesh and blood as much as the Society among which Man is placed. I was in dementia, I repeat, for I didn't comprehend myself and my position toward the world ;—I knew that I hadn't the least well-founded proper backing, yet behaved like a maniac, exceeded my circumstances in every direction, and that, too, with all the ignorance and inexperience of a person who has no substantial claims to money ; nobody else, and particularly no rich man, so squanders it as I have. Well, the consequence has been a complicated welter of misère, the intricacies whereof I cannot face without a shudder. Myself I can't count up the items,—it's unheard and unexplainable, the pit into which I've tumbled. Your enormous and persistent efforts to pull me out of it only made me still foolhardier, letting me trust to a blind something I could give myself no true account of, but which struck my eyes with blindness more and more. My life at Leipzig, the miserable position I filled there, became an intolerable burden to me ; it drove me to so-called independent action ; I made extravagant excursions, the result of which, coupled with the still abiding consequences of my earlier follies, set me at total variance with my family, and at last entailed the present break with all of my relations. What my better nature, my art-genius, have suffered through it, is unspeakable !

That is my situation ; I recognise it clearly. I might now be content with this new-won insight, and determine to do better ; if I stood free of all the consequences of my repeated follies, I might look towards my destiny with calm now,—for I have secured a safe good income for the immediate future, and with my fresh experiences—with the thus-reaped conviction that I can depend on nothing but my powers and self henceforth to remedy it all,—I may now hope to be turning over a new leaf. But I can't return to Magdeburg till I have rid myself of a lump debt of 400 thaler [*circa* £60]. And so I stand—abandoned and cut off from all, from all on whom I erewhile reckoned ; merely accompanied by the anxious fearings of my Mother,—she can give me nothing. *You* are the only one left to me, and I still have the boldness to say so without being afraid of angering or turning you away from me ; every other prop, all

other hope, has deceived me, and it is just this undeception, of which I'm clearly conscious now, that inspires me with the extreme courage to step before you thus once more. Perhaps I've reached the point at which I finally shall dash to pieces;—perhaps you'll coldly turn your back on me in sorrow over an illusion as regards my friendship toward you; it may be that I've strained your trust in my honesty to the breaking-point, that your long-suffering is exhausted:—should that be the case, my misery then would drive me to the pitch of really being no longer worthy of you.—But before that, I'll make just this one more appeal to you:—Don't look upon our present situation as a mere accident of this life; regard it as an *event* of greatest moment in your life and mine,—and in fact it is so,—it is my re-birth. Believe me, should my spirit e'er unfold its wings to ample beauty—of which I now despair,—'twill not stay hidden from the world *who* rescued it. Ponder, my Theodor, what here is at stake! I'll not importune you, however, against your conviction;—a swift end is better than a lingering one,—and such were this year's upshot!——

I commenced this letter in the fiercest paroxysms, and more tears flowed from my eyes than words from my pen;—it has been beneficial:—now I have reached a sacred peace;—I have confessed; my absolution rests with you.—

I hope to be able to leave here to-morrow, and one day later than my letter I shall come to you;—how will you receive me?—I ought to arrive at Magdeburg the 28th inst.;—whether I can, rests in your hands! My God, my God, the length to which it has come with me!—If *you* turn your back on me, I have come to—the extremity!—Farewell, farewell! Remember me!

Thy

RICHARD.

27

(Addressed to Leipzig as before. *Post-mark: Magdeburg* 8–9, 23/9.)

MAGDEBURG, *the 22nd Sept.* 1836 [*really* 5].

DEAR THEODOR,—If you love me, you'll be angry with me for not writing you before; and if you know me, you'll forgive me:—so no more on that point. Spurred by a sudden inspiration, I intended writing you the other day, to reproach you for having overlooked a most poetic trait in your *Columbus*. I had read somewhere or other that, wearied by the endless squabbles at the Spanish court, Columbus had already thought of quitting Spain much earlier, and only Love had held him back, poetically and romantically uplifting him from his depressed condition; that in the strong arms of Love he had continually imbibed fresh strength and energy,—for when intrigues at Court had robbed or bent that, he would journey to Cordova and embrace his sweetheart, who passionately loved the dauntless visionary, for all the silvering of his hair, and bore to him a son, Fernando. She fettered him to Spain, and strengthened him to

face his task anew; so that, more than any motives of Politics, 'twas Love that won for Spain the glory of discovery. A splendid love!—And more than any notions of Morality, 'tis Love that strengthens me, as well; a lofty, sentimental love would un-nerve me now,—mine makes me bright and cheerful. With *renunciation* grinning at me everywhere, who'll stint me of this one *enjoyment?*

I'm extending my sphere of action more and more now; I am writing for money. I have become collaborator in the new musical journal.* Should I still break up, 'twill be God's will. I also weep no more. I shall never return to Leipzig. What's Mendelssohn doing? †

Write me; I thank you for it in advance: Breite Weg, No. 34. Farewell. Farewell.

Thy

RICHARD.

28

(Same address. *Post-mark: Magdeburg* 5–6, 3/10. *Seal: R.W.*)

MAGDEBURG, *the 2nd Octo.* 35.

DEAR THEODOR,—You will have got my letter now in any case, presumably the same day as I received yours; and I hope this circumstance will have annulled, or at least mollified sundry reproaches. I fell into a hideous pool of drudgery and swot here; all our Opera affairs had been slung on my neck. Yesterday at last we let fly for the first time with *Zampa*, and its success may be really called considerable. So I've a little rest, at length, on that side. . . .

29

(Same address. *Post-mark: Magdeburg* 2–3, 14/10. *Seal: R.W.*)

MAGDEBURG, *the 11th Octob.* 1835.

After your letter, which crossed my first to you, also after a second from myself, I made certain you'd write me quite soon again;—why haven't you? Are you cross with me, and wherefore? I should really have thought I had touched upon a point in each of my two letters that merited our mutual attention.—I've a deal of care and worry now,—and above all, to put up with bitter ingratitude;—I am learning what life is, God knows!—Winter, with all its misère, is invading my limbs again; I am pale, and enjoy myself little.—I have an idea of getting up my *Feen* here ere long.—In spite of it all, I feel plenty of go in me.—

Adieu,—write to me!

Thy

RICHARD.

* *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, founded by Schumann in April of the previous year; see *Life of Wagner*, i, 200–1.—Tr.

† Who entered on his duties as Gewandhaus conductor a fortnight later.—Tr.

30

(Same address. *Post-mark: Magdeburg* 10–11, 27/10. *Seal: R.W.*)

MAGDEBURG, *the 26th Oct.* 35.

I daresay you will be surprised at not having had an answer from me to your last two letters.—I had written you on the spur of the moment, with an enclosure to F. Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, and already ordered a supply of oiled canvas, to forward him through you a mass of my compositions;—you shall have that sealed-up letter some day, if you come here.—I've completely altered my opinion, and sent you nothing, for I am bidding total good-bye to the concert-room for the present.* It would be a pretty thing, at this time of day, to take your advice and send a polished overture to Leipzig! I want to be no hanger-on; and your praises of Mendelssohn set me dead against any such plan. Adieu, prim solidity; I surrender to the tinsel of the stage. I am nothing if not an opera-composer now, and only upon my opera, at which I'm working hard again, can I throw myself with body, soul and hope.—All my pleasure is in the practical now,—and in the brief time I've been back here it has brought me many a fair reward. The local Opera is my work entirely, and by dint of a quick eye I have lately brought a couple of young talents to light who will have something to say to the stage-world one day. Who had ever thought of Minna's sister [Amalie Planer], then in quite an insignificant position at Brunswick? I engaged the girl for her fine contralto, and coached her up for *Romeo* here;—such a sensation, I should say, has seldom been made by any beginner;—the people were just raving;—the opera had to be repeated forthwith, to a house packed full, and the din was as great as with the Devrient.—In the same way I fished out a little tenor, Schreiber, and am training him to the public's greatest thanks. That gives one joy; and it is all my own doing!—

Hark you! I am getting proud of myself as conductor, too. My operas all go like clockwork; we are studying fresh ones—*Jessonda* (brand-new here!)—*Norma*, *Lestocq*; they're to follow on each other's heels. And then our unexampled regularity in business;—wages are paid on the nail now;—everything's good,—good! And I'm unshackled ruler of the Opera; which also gives me joy! Perhaps I may turn out something similar to Mendelssohn,—but I'm only at Magdeburg, he at Leipzig,—which makes the difference.—Never mind, I'll push ahead,—I feel plenty of go in me!—I wouldn't give a fig for Leipzig now,—I am on the eve of opening quite another door for myself,—namely Berlin, where I think of producing my *Liebesverbot* first.—More on that another time;—only this much, I haven't any hankering after you folk and your fame.

* May the above not be the true explanation of the enigmatic "mislaying" by Mendelssohn of the "juvenile symphony"—*i.e.*, may it not be that Wagner never really sent it him, but in his old age confused his memory of the intention with a fancied deed? In that case the manuscript score, etc., might easily have been lost during his own constant peregrinations.—Tr.

The 27th.

I was interrupted yesterday.—It is remarkable: in your last letters you also are driving at a restoration for [*i.e.* to displace ?] our modern notions; the modern conditions of Love no longer suit you, and perhaps have never. Well, my present social position is a little drag upon me also, and I could almost be so weak as to submit myself again to many a superannuated notion; only, my unshakable opinion of the present standpoint of Art exerts the most provocative power upon my social views as well. So with my music;—never and never again will I kowtow to our Germanity, and not all your Leipzig classic *gloire* has strength to draw me back there. We have crammed too much indigestible stuff into our stomachs. Methought it seemly of late to concern myself with a German work again,—so I am getting up *Jessonda;* and how I *cut and run* again from all ideas of Restoration! This opera refills me with a perfect loathing; effeminate Bellini is a regular Hercules, compared with this long, big, learned-sentimental Spohr.—The other day it struck me to compose an overture to *Romeo and Juliet;*—I was pondering the Adagio, and would you believe it ?—I returned quite of itself to the pattern of Bellini's stale and mawkish overture, with his mêlée-like crescendo.—

The Haas is very ill.—Don't put yourself in too great a stew about Minna,—I'm leaving everything to Fate. She loves me, and her love is worth a lot to me;—she is my centre of gravity now, lends me consistence and warmth;—I cannot give her up. I only know this much, dear Theodor, that you have no acquaintance yet with the sweets of such a relation; there's nothing common, unworthy or enervating about it; our Epicureanism [*sic*] is pure and strong,—not the pitiful accessories.—We love and believe in each other, and leave the rest to Fate;—of that you've no knowledge, and it also is only with an actress that one can live like that;—this superiority to all social conventions can exist nowhere but where the whole background is fantastic and poetic licence.—

I have a nice pleasant room 3 flights up, on the Breiten-Weg, exactly opposite the Baldini,—I got a decent grand piano cheap, and so all would be well if I didn't have to live in such hideous economy;—I'm not precisely grumbling at it,—but when I reflect that this all won't suffice to expiate my recent past, I could turn furious. You may imagine how frugally I live now, if I'm paying off 30 thaler a month; that's not so bad.—But listen, as you made me up an account to the last farthing, don't go and leave me stranded on this *first* [of next month; see No. 31];—I am reckoning on it for sure, or I shall be bankrupt.—And listen again, if it comes to a tiny bit more, I shall certainly not be annoyed with you,—believe me! Well, we shall see what turns up,—it can't be too much.

What a life I'm leading now,—no! this respectability is boundless; I am getting a heavenly good name here. The thing has its drawbacks,—but if I can only arrive at something with it, I don't mind.—Just haven't I grown tame! And I'm a good conductor too, by Jove,—I am a bit conceited of it now;—let me only get a little known with an opera, and

I shall be all right!—Now write to me, and don't take anything amiss,—you know I am an ass! Adieu! Adieu, my Theodor!

Thy

RICHARD.

31

(Same address. *Post-mark: Magdeburg* 2–3, 5/11. *Seal: R.W.*)

MAGDEBURG, *the 5th Nov.* 35.

MY DEAR THEODOR,—I'm in too melting a mood to return you hard and bitter reproaches for your last letter; but it's sad that you have so poor a remembrance of me, as to misjudge me and my letter in such a way. You people must have formed a fine opinion of me, for you to subject each one of my words to the unjustest criticism; nor is it only your harshness, twistedness and arrogance, that hit me, but I also take you for a dolt. I do not know exactly what I wrote,—I only know how I must lower my key, and pull myself in, now that even in yourself I've found so strict a critic that he won't allow my waggery the smallest play.—Excuse me from defending myself *en détail*, as I do not even dare defend myself *en gros:* you people's doctrinaire mood overawes me too much.—To be sure, your own letters are but relative, seeing they are critiques on mine;—nevertheless I'll give you something positive in exchange.

Minna went off to Berlin yesterday morning; what my state of mind is like, I can't describe to you;—that's no mere spooniness,—'tis love, for sure. She is starring there;—perhaps she'll remain, too, as she has come into repeated collision with a Mad. Grabowsky here.—How I feel it! My God! My God!—If I wished to be modern, this would be the exact moment, no doubt, I might seize upon for breaking off;—but there's the rub: my heart is broken,—quite bourgeoisly broken.—Oblige me by imagining the rest,—we'll *speak* of it some other time.—What I would give to have a friend with me now; but I've none at all, excepting you,——and you also, my Brutus? !—Theodor, I am getting sentimental, and had better not go on to-day!—My Magdeburg garret?—Ay, ay! "Spare me the remainder, my prince!"—(: he *falters*, and tears come *into his eyes*.)—The Prince:—Donkey, why are you weeping?—(Exeunt.)

Humour, humour, my boy!—

And you never sent me the money:—why put me in the vulgar predicament of having to remind you of what you do not owe me?—You promised me a trifle for the first of November, and I had made my reckonings accordingly. Weren't you able?

It's really too naïve;—in the same breath I'm bemoaning a sweetheart, and dunning a friend I have nothing to claim from!—Ah, Theodor, Theodor!—Soon more from your dead friend,

HERR RICHARD WAGNER

32

(Same address. *Post-mark: Magdeburg* 1–2, 26/11. *Seal: R.W.*)

MAGDEBURG, *the 25th Nov.* 1835.

Hearty thanks, dear Theodor, and less for the matter itself, than for the delicate manner in which you polish off a thing like that and then pass on.

But what the Devil is up with yourself, with these eternal illnesses? I maintain, you expend your energies too little. Illnesses keep fairly off my neck, tho' it very often has smelt like a sick-room in my inner man. You should have seen me during the fortnight that Minna was away; great God, how the girl has netted me, without really attempting to! She has come back again for my sake, in spite of a brilliant engagement having been offered her in Berlin. What do you say to that? My brother-in-law Wolfram was in Berlin at the same time as she, stopping at *the same* hotel, and was her hourly companion and cavalier; and, horribly prejudiced against her by my family tho' he was, he has been so converted by her love for me and her exemplary behaviour, that he writes me: "Remain true to her,—if there is *one* who deserves it, it's she!" She made a sensation at Berlin, has rejected more than 4 eligible parties who offered themselves straight off. Devil take it, that touches one!—

Do come and see us soon,—you'll find an operatic company here that will take a lot of beating. It's a regular treat!—Three scrumptious lady singers: Mad. Pollert from Petersburg, an intelligent young woman with great big eyes,—a heavenly voice, perfect vocalist and *gifted* artist;—then Fr. Limbach, aged 18,—awfully pretty, round youthful voice; and Amalie Planer, with an imposing contralto, a magnificent delivery,—she's making a prodigious furore as *Romeo*.—Two tenors: Freymüller, the idol of our public, voice, delivery and dramatic vim;—2.: Schreiber, a young, extremely handsome little chap of 20 years, with a liquid high tenor.—For bass we have Krug, who was at Leipzig earlier, and has astonishingly improved since.—Well, I tell you it's a genuine delight; and if I had not so firmly made my mind up to produce my opera [*D.Lt.*] at the Königstadt in Berlin first, I certainly should do it here, for I could cast it admirably.

Bring your new works with you; I'm really most keen to see a comedy and a romance by you.—I am industrious past any conception now, and have practically no more than 3 big numbers of my opera to do. End of January it will be ready for performance.——Let me have something soon; write,—and we'll have a good row over it. Laube has written 2 new books, among them a novel—*The Actress*;—I'm quite immensely fond of Laube, he's a man the like of whom one rarely finds now,—he has both mind and heart; a delightful fellow.

I wish you a speedy recovery, old chap;—talk of me a little, and hold me dear.

Thy
RICHARD.

33

(Address as before. *Post-mark: Magdeburg* 9–10, 29/12.)

MAGDEBURG, *the 27th Dec.* 35.

You may call me names once again, Theodor, I've not written you for so long. It will sound almost ridiculous, if I excuse myself by saying I haven't had the chance. In a certain sense it is so. My God, what have I not had to do of late! In the first place, my office, which often has robbed me of every spare hour for weeks on end; and then the composition of my opera, which I shall have finished by New Year's Eve. I'm in the white heat of my talent now; it all pours forth quite slick. I have finally decided about the production. It shall take place here the end of February 36; in various respects I could nowhere bring my opera out better:—two excellent tenors, and an Isabella such as I shall *seldom* improve upon, our out and out talented *Pollert*. She has no name in Germany as yet, since she comes direct from Petersburg; but you'll all have to open your eyes before long. So I mean to give my *Liebesverbot* its first performance here, get Kornel to come to it from Brunswick, Cerf from Berlin, and Ringelhard from Leipzig [all managers]; and then, God willing, to all the four winds with my *opera*. Behold my plan of operations!

I am living as if in a cage here;—O there must be a change soon!—these common cares and battles to keep body and soul together must soon have an end;—you have no idea of them, I'm sure, dear Theodor. I know them now, and when they're all got over, I intend having a little blow out; I have no stomach for it at present. Enough of that; you cannot really feel it. Only this much besides: let anyone approach me now and turn up his nose at my affection for Minna, and I'll smash it in for him. God knows where and what I should be without her now! Let that simple allusion suffice you; please imagine the rest.—I am writing this letter at her desk; love for love: I am in her abode, and writing to you.

What are you doing, how are you? Have you another society comedy on? Let me just come to it; I am quite in the humour for that now. Tell me, haven't you *any* serious love-affair?—I think of you a lot.

Laube is going to Berlin for the winter. The preface to his *Characteristics*, 2 volumes, pleased me much.—You ask after Schmale so often, who hasn't been here for ever so long. You'll never recognise our theatre; all new,—but good. If we only could keep together like this for a tidy spell, we'd be bound to make a stir.—

Happy New Year,—dreadful old!—Farewell!—Write me, and be good to me.

Thy

RICHARD W.

34

(*No outward address.*)

MAGDEBURG, *the 21st Jan.* 36.

You said you meant to come and see me in the early weeks of this year; why don't you, then?—You ought to make my acquaintance

now, and see what I am! For two months not a drop of wine has passed my lips; I'm stay-at-home, working—and—!—The composition of my opera was finished on New Year's Eve; at present I am instrumenting it the whole night through! Its production is to be the end of February,—I'm to have the second takings as fee. Come over and hear what I have to expect;—the part you know already is the weakest!—By that time, however, I shall be done for;—I have pulled through 5 whole months, but it no longer is possible;—I shall come a cropper over it! My creditors refuse to be put off with my opera; I must have money if I'm not to go mad, and if the couple of thaler left me from my wages every time are not to be impounded too!—Ah, how can I paint you a hobble like this? You only know such misery from hearsay!—Nor do I want you to make me a gift, but to buy the takings of my opera off me. If you have any confidence in it, you're the very one who has nothing to fear;—I estimate those takings at 100 thal.: would you give me that much for them? The bargain is honest, and I only propose it to yourself because I feel justified in looking to you for the most trust in a happy result. If I don't have the money this month, I cannot let myself be seen here any longer. It's too preposterous, and more than I'm able to bear. If you people wished to test me,—good,—for 5 months I've done and suffered what is humanly possible;—more I can't!—

Forgive my filling my letter with nothing but *the above*,—but when this human misère is weighing me down so, I have no mind left for intellectual interests. I should hardly know what else to write you on,—all art appears so foolish and absurd;—I am writing to nobody, and you're the only one to whom I can write like this;—my own people hear nothing,—since they're all shut off from me. Beyond yours, I only know one faithful heart,—and without that I should have perished already.—

Adieu, my Theodor!—

Thy

Richard.

35

(Same address. *Post-mark: Magdeburg* 5–6, 17/3.)

Magdeburg, *the* 18*th* [?] *March* 36.

Dear Theodor,—I won't enquire your reasons for not having *answered* me,—but I beseech you to come to Magdeburg as soon as you *can*, this week if possible. Then you'll both hear my opera produced next week, and also meet a mortal—a *friend* (as Cäcilie [R.W.'s half-sister] assures me in her last letter)—for whom your presence *now*—and *here*—is perhaps the only means of rescue from unpleasantnesses of every and the most atrocious kind.

Adieu till then!

Thy

Richard.

36

(Same address. *Post-mark: Magdeburg* 10–11, 26/3.)

DEAR THEODOR,—Everyone is getting very lukewarm toward me. You have such big interests now, that mine is bound to look small to you.—To-morrow, *Sunday*, will be the first night of my opera;* the following Tuesday its second and last, because our Opera disperses the 1st of *April*. It rests with your good pleasure whether you will hear it; you take a great delight in music, don't you?—you know every atom of Mendelssohn's,—so, just a wee mite of attention for me!

Adieu!

Thy
RICHARD.

The 26th.

36A

From Rosalie Wagner [end of March, 1836.]

Address: Herr Theodor Apel. Local.

ESTEEMED FRIEND,—At my brother's request I send you a few lines, most urgently and cordially begging you to give him the great pleasure of coming to Magdeburg for the performance of his opera. The letter must have been delayed a whole day, for I have only just received it, and the second performance will take place *to-morrow*. Consequently you would need to start to-day itself, which certainly may prove inconvenient; but since he has had so much care and worry that he has become quite wan and haggard, as my mother writes me, with all her heart she wishes him some recreation among his friends. Perhaps Grieshammer might also prevail upon himself to accompany you. The weather is fine, the roads good; so *please do this*, dear friend, and give him that pleasure. If you were to read my mother's letter, in which she depicts his sore trouble and the scenes with that troop of comedians at Magdeburg, you would be touched and softened.

If it is possible for you to come to us for a few moments either now or after table, when I could shew you the letter, it would heartily delight us, and you would thereby much oblige

Your
sincere friend,
ROSALIE WAGNER.

In greatest haste.

37

(Address as before. *Post-mark: Magdeburg* 11–12, 20/4. *Seal: R.W.*

MAGDEBURG, *the 20th Apr.* 36.

DEAR THEODOR,—You might please send me a little cask of '34 quite soon; I still owe the chorus here a promised glass of wine for my opera,

* Theatre bills announced *Das Liebesverbot* in fact for the 27th, but at the last moment (with its title toned down to *The Novice of Palermo*) it was postponed to the 29th, when it actually came off, with a disastrous attempt at repetition on the 30th.—Tr.

and really cannot pay for one. But of course I only ask it if it won't cause you too great expense or inconvenience.

Wishing you a pleasant time, Adieu!

Thy
RICHARD W.

P.s.—Alike the above and your promised arrival, however, would have to be soon; as it might happen that I got laid by the heels here, when I should be unable to keep you much company. Soon, then; you understand?

38

(Same address. *Post-mark: Magdeburg* 8–9, 7/5.)

MAGDEBURG, *the 6th May.*

My horizon is clouding more and more. I will accept your offer of a sanctuary at Ermlitz;—please give orders to have me admitted, and a room allotted me, should I turn up.

Farewell.

Thy
RICHARD W.

[According to a letter of R. W.'s to his mother, of the end of this May, Apel answered that Ermlitz was then in the workmen's hands. That message was followed within a few months by the fall from horseback which laid Apel up with an affection of the brain for two whole years, ending in almost total blindness. A tragic termination to this youthful friendship, mere scattered echoes whereof are supplied by the remaining few letters.—TR.]

(To be concluded)

The Aftermath

By Edwin Pugh

I

The four-wheeled cab with the drawn blinds rolled slowly along the Embankment and drew up with an abrupt jerk outside New Scotland Yard. Two men alighted from the cab. One was a police official in plain clothes; the other, by token of his regulation grey suit and bowler hat, was not less obviously a convict, just released from Wormwood Scrubbs and brought to headquarters for his ticket. They entered the building, walking in step. A short passage led them to a clean, bare office. There the convict was given some miscellaneous advice and a printed sheet of paper. He accepted both in silence.

"You may go now," said the man behind the desk.

The convict donned his hat and stalked out.

He was a big man, tall and well-proportioned. His face was one not easily to be missed or forgotten. It was a face full of forceful expression, dark, vividly coloured; the features bold, having a rugged cragginess of outline. The eyes large, restless, bright, were shaded by prickly black brows. There was a suggestion of heavy bone under the tight-drawn tanned skin of the cheek and square-hewn jaw. He wore a moustache with a short stiff beard and whiskers.

As he stood there in the full sunshine a man in the uniform of the Salvation Army strode briskly up to him and clapped him on the shoulder.

The ticket-of-leave man wheeled about with a lowering scowl; then, scarce deigning to glance at the obtrusive stranger, turned his back upon him.

The stranger extended a sinewy, hairy hand.

"Brother . . ."

"Go and scrape yourself!" was the response.

He moved forward suddenly with a dogged shake of the shoulders, hustling the Salvationist out of his path. He crossed the muddy road, leaned his elbows on the parapet, and gazed down at the turbid water lapping the smooth grey stones.

It was a fine day in mid-autumn. The sun shone with a

coppery lustre through a veil of purple haze. The water flashed forth patines of gold. Ranging eastward, in a noble curve, the young trees tossed their flaming heads under the rude caress of the wind. Across the river, as it seemed, the sombre dome of St. Paul's Cathedral reared its mighty convex above the crazy chimney-stacks.

"Brother . . . "

Again it was the voice of the Salvationist.

The ticket-of-leave man growled impatiently. Without troubling to turn from contemplation of the smoke-wreathed scene, he uttered over his shoulder:

"Tell you what it is, old Blood-and-Fire. I've had all the lip-salve I require from you, already. I've been eight years and a bit in stir. A miserable sinner. As the parsons didn't forget to tell me." He paused. "If you want to know my name," he resumed, as the Salvationist did not depart from him, "it's Day—Shagger Day. Perhaps you remember it? If you don't, there's a matter o' three rozzers as'll only be too pleased to give you my private history pat. Two of 'em wi' broken jaws, and one wi' the back of his skull all starred like a piece o' frosted glass. Nice-looking men they were too, and good talkers. Just about your weight." He spat. "Don't you think your dinner might be getting cold, cully?"

The Salvationist began to chuckle and crow joyously.

"Well, Shagger," he said, "I'd ha' known you anywhere."

Shagger turned then and confronted him. His eyes searched the missioner's face.

"Corner?"

"Yes. Your good old Cross, dear lad."

"Ought to ha' been Guy."

"Don't you like 'em?" He caressed his flowing whiskers. "They're the best Old Hyams could let me have."

"Come off a cokernut, I reckon! Who told you——?"

Cross Corner screwed up one side of his face.

"Got the office. Never mind how," he said. "Didn't know to a day, though. Been hanging about the Scrubbs and then here for nigh on three weeks, I have, clobbered up like this."

"What for?"

"What for!" Corner's eyebrows climbed his forehead. "Now, there's a question for you to ask!"

"A question for you to answer, too."

"Why, Shagger, I didn't want you to think, when you come out, as all your pals had give you the go-by."

"I believe you. And now we're both liars."

"I wanted to show you you wasn't forgotten."

"You did! That's why you was so careful, then, not to come near me all the time I was under remand, I suppose. That's why you let me lay and rot and eat putty bread and drink gaol soup—warm water what they'd washed up the dinner-things in. That's why I never had no lawyer or nothing. And nobody to swear I was a misborn angel. That's why you and all them other slack-backs kept so precious dark all the time and let me pay for all. That was your friendliness, was it! G-r-r-r! Tell you what it is, Cross, I'd tip you over that there wall and give you a swim with the sewer-rats if it wasn't for the money you're going to give me."

"What a pity!" cried Cross. "I never brought none out."

"You'll take less back."

"Shagger——"

"Bung it." He held out his open hand under Corner's nose.

"How much——?"

"All you've got. And if you stick to a stiver I'll . . . No, I won't drown you. I'll take you by the scruff o' the neck and march you across to the Yard yonder. You was very clever, Cross, you was, when you put on that there jersey and hat; but it tells a tale. It shows you ain't too anxious—not just at present—to be recognised by the tiggies. See?"

"Would a quid——?"

"Bli'me! I'll put you in your gaudy hat if you don't parker quick."

Cross Corner dipped into his breeches-pocket and produced a handful of mixed coins.

"That the lot?" asked Shagger Day, seizing the money. He grinned. "Now we'll go on the everlasting bust, Cross."

"Won't you come to the ken first?"

Shagger winked. "Bit eager to get me on the job again, ain't you? Nice lot o' graft waiting for Shagger to do, I suppose? But Shagger ain't taking any, not till he's had a look round. . . . Perhaps you won't believe me, Cross, but what d'you think I've been doing ever since that there old swine of a judge put the ten stretch on me? What d'you think? Why, I've been making plans against the day I come out. All the time I have. Over and over again, I've made 'em. I started at it as I was being took from the dock to the cells. And, barring when I was asleep, I ain't left off once since. Rolling up them balls o' twine, legging it round the exercise-yard,

wheeling the trucks down at the quarries—it's always been the same. Always making arrangements for when my time was up. I've laid awake o' nights and worked it out. I've shut my eyes and seen myself doing the things. Breaking a bottle o' the boy at Gibbons's. Strolling up the Strand on a Saturday night. With all the electric lights a-blazing. And the people pushing up against me. The 'buses rattling by, and the cabs. And whistles going outside the theayters. And big commissionaires, with umbrellas and wheel-baskets, showing plump rosy girls into their carriages, wi' bits o' bare arm and neck peeping out, and any gauge quantity o' lace. And their little hands in white gloves, picking up their flounces to give their fancy blokes a treat in the way o' stockings and ankles. I've seen all that. And I've seen myself. . . . Ah, I've seen myself a size bigger than life, sitting with the nobs and tits in Rotten Row—my word!—and brassing up my deaner for a chair and raising my hat and. . . . What's that, Cross?" He started, gripped his companion's sleeve.

"Only Big Ben striking."

"What time is it? No, don't tell me. What do it matter?" He rubbed the palms of his hands together. "Funny! So different yesterday it was. Some interest, then, in knowing that another hour was gone. Now . . ." He laughed. "Time's my own. It belongs to me. I can do what I like with it. Hoard it up. Or spend it. Why, Cross, I could pity you, you mouldy old two-forked parsnip! You don't know what freedom is. You ain't ever been in stir. That's where I'm one up against the whole world! . . . But I was telling you. I've seen myself going to a nice little restyouraunt and doing myself in style. With a napkin and all, and a fellar in a clawhammer coat and a boiled shirt to wait on me while I eat. I've seen myself having a gin-and-bitters and then a fat quart bottle o' Bass. Soup I've seen myself having that wasn't the corned-beef variety, neither. And a snack o' fish and a crisp brown ontray, with a nice juicy undercut off a good sirloin to follow. And a' omelette. And a truffle in aspect. Like what the fly-flats used to stand us, Cross, down at Crematori's."

Cross Corner nodded gravely.

"That's what I've seen myself doing," said Shagger Day. "And now, by Christmas! I'm going to have some salt and mustard and pepper wi' my dreams."

"It'll cost a bit."

"Matters not. Ain't the money yours? But, I say, you can't come along o' me in that get-up, y'know."

Cross Corner cast a rueful eye over his dazzling raiment. "What'd I better do, then?"

"Home, sweet home, you," said Shagger Day, maliciously.

"No," protested Corner, who did not mean to lose sight of an old acquaintance so opportunely met. "No, Shagger, I won't leave you. I'll wait outside while you get it down you."

"Step it, then."

"We'd better cross the road here."

"Well, wait till the traffic slackens down a bit."

"Traffic! What traffic?"

"All these here——"

"Two growlers and a mud-cart."

"There's a hansom further up."

Cross Corner stared. Shagger, whose hands were oddly restless, uttered a thin, nervous laugh.

"Right you are!" he said, with a poor assumption of ease, and stepped into the roadway. He was hurrying across at a brisk trot, when a raucous hooting sounded close at hand and a motor-car buzzed round the corner, snapping and hissing spitefully. Cross Corner stood by to let it pass. But Shagger seemed suddenly struck crazy. He darted forward, drew back, wheeled . . . then ran, as a frightened hen runs, straight ahead of the vehicle. Corner saw him swerve and duck. The chauffeur put on the brake, hard. The passenger yelled an angry warning. His yell was echoed horribly in a rending screech from Shagger Day.

Then the car stopped. Corner rushed forward, seized Shagger by the elbow, and dragged him on to the opposite pavement.

"What the good year—!" he exclaimed.

"Hold me up!" gasped Shagger Day. "I'm going to faint, Cross."

He was sprayed from head to foot with a feather of yellow mud. His face was of the colour of a sodden rag, and wet as if he had dipped his head into a bucket of water. With tremulous, gaping mouth and leaden-hued lips he reeled and bore on Corner for support, shuddering in every fibre.

"What took you?" cried Corner. "I never see——"

"It was that there bluebottle thing," Shagger whispered thickly. "I dunno. My nerve's gone." He wiped his streaming face and sniggered. "Anybody notice me, Cross, d'you think?" He gazed around as if he expected to confront a jeering multitude. A few miserable vagrants, arrested in their moody prowling by the outcry and the stoppage of the

motor-car, lingered in their vicinity. "Tell 'em if they don't hop it, Cross, I'll put 'em in their hats," said Shagger, recovering his native ferocity, though he still spoke in laboured gasps.

Corner nodded. "Cut it, Funny-face," said he, addressing himself to a loathly tramp, and forgetting in his agitation his sanctimonious apparel, "or I'll put the kybosh on you in less than half o' no time."

The tramp showed his toothless gums derisively.

"Gawd save me from being a Christian!" he said.

Then he hitched up his pants and shuffled away.

"Hail a cab, Cross," said Shagger. "We'll drive to Gibbons's."

Cross did so. They climbed in. Their way lay through Northumberland Avenue and Trafalgar Square.

As they rattled along Corner observed how Shagger Day's big strong hands trembled on the edge of the apron. When foot-passengers, crossing the road, passed in front of them within a few inches of the horse's nose, Shagger would all unconsciously clutch at his sleeve. Once the cabman had to rein in his horse rather sharply to avoid a waggon. Shagger exhaled a sighing breath and started up from his seat.

"Gibbons's" was a small restaurant situate in one of the many shabby-genteel streets that debouch on Shaftesbury Avenue.

"You get out first," said Shagger, though he was on the near side. He followed Corner gingerly. "You pay the cabby," he whispered, slipping a coin into Corner's hand.

"Now you go in and feed," said Corner. "I'll wait about."

"Dessay a bit o' grub might steady me. Eh, Cross?"

"Sure to."

"I wish you was coming in wi' me."

"It don't matter."

"You won't go away?"

"Not me!"

"That's right, Cross."

He patted Corner gently on the back; then entered the ting-house.

He sat down at a table near the door, whence he could catch occasional glimpses of the red and blue uniform through a gap in the window-hangings.

"Yes, sare?" murmured a waiter, bending over him.

"Gin-and-bitters. Orange."

"Yes, sare."

The *aperitif* was brought on a tray. Shagger picked it up, sipped, set it down again, abruptly.

"Here!" he called out to the waiter. "This gin-and-bitters?"

"Yes, sare."

"Orange bitters?"

"Yes, sare."

"Tastes blooming rum!"

"O, no, sare, gin," the waiter protested.

Shagger sipped again, doubtfully.

"Take it away," he said. "Can't stomach it at any price. And bring me a quart o' Bass, cock, instead."

"Yes, sare."

Shagger unfolded his napkin and rubbed his lips with it vigorously. This gin-and-bitters fell very far short of the piquant liquor of his dreams. And he had used to be so fond of gin-and-bitters.

The waiter brought him *hors d'œuvres*. Shagger tried a strip of cured herring.

"Brine!" he spluttered. "Ugh!" He blinked and coughed. "Lively wi' that Bass," he bawled.

"Yes, sare."

The waiter filled a long glass. The creaming beer, richly yellow, sizzling with tiny eddying bubbles, was just as Shagger had pictured it at numberless Barmecide feasts. He lifted the tumbler and drank deep. But the savour pleased him not at all. He felt a premonitory sinking of the heart.

The waiter set soup before him.

"Place changed hands?" asked Shagger.

"No, sare."

"This Bass——?"

"Ze best bottling, sare."

Shagger dipped his spoon into the soup.

"What d'you call this hair-wash?"

"*Consommé aux Persian perles.*"

"Perishin' pearls, eh?"

He tasted warily.

"Here!" he said, with a wry mouth. "You can make yourself a necklace out o' this. I don't fancy it."

The waiter, torn between amazement at the conduct of his eccentric customer and joy in the profit that would accrue from so much uneaten provender, removed the soup and brought fish.

It was turbot with caper sauce. Shagger, his palate debauched by a long experience of coarse, strong food, forced

himself to eat a little; but it lay on his tongue insipidly and he only swallowed it with difficulty.

So it was with the roast sirloin and potatoes *fondantes*, the *vol-au-vent* of lamb sweetbread, the *crepinette* of fowl and French beans, the pheasant and chips and *asperges en branches*. All seemed to turn to dust and ashes in his longing mouth. He could have groaned aloud in a sickening regret as each dish passed away from him. The ice pudding brought a dull pain to his head in the region of his eyes. Only one course did he enjoy—the cheese; and that because oaten biscuits were served with it, reminding him of the prison bread.

The beer fell flat in the mockingly tall glass. In his impotent rage of defeat he had splashed the napery with flying gouts of gravy and morsels of meat and vegetables that slowly coagulated under his eyes. He could have shed scalding tears as the fabric of his visions dissolved in the fires of reality. Forlornly hoping against hope that some one item on the menu might even yet fulfil his anticipations, he nerved himself to order a liqueur and a cigar. He ordered cognac; it seared his lips. He lit the cigar, and his stomach rolled in protest.

Then he commanded the waiter to bring the bill. That alone exceeded his expectations. He had one small sweet thrill of joy in flinging down a kingly tip. Then he took his hat and quitted the place, empty and hungry and miserable.

II

Whilst Shagger was in the restaurant, Cross Corner had been effecting a change in his attire. He had gone to a second-hand clothier's hard by, one of the many shops of that kind which usually abound in cosmopolitan neighbourhoods; and had made an arrangement with the Hebrew proprietor whereby he acquired a rough frieze ulster and a bowler hat in exchange for his red-banded peak cap and a few shillings. (For Mr. Corner, despite his passionate protests, had not handed over all his ready cash to his dear friend.) Thus re-clothed, and divested of his false beard, he stood revealed in his true colours as a small wiry man of sixty, with a puckered, livid face and a crooked mouth. Shagger having commented boisterously and even irreverently on his altered appearance, Corner inquired:

"And how did you go on the grub stakes, Shagger?"

For a moment it was in Shagger's mind to vent his spleen in a garnished description of the unfortunate meal he had not eaten; but an odd sense of shame constrained him. He rolled his eyes and stroked his waistcoat.

"Glad o' that, old dear," murmured Corner, sympathetically.

"Just right it was," said Shagger.

His head was aching. The noise and bustle of the street confused and harried him. The unclean odours of the gutters and the close confined air weighed heavily upon his senses. An acrid bitterness surged up in him, and when he spoke again his voice sounded shrill from peevishness.

He was consumed with a sudden desire to feel the wash of cool air on his stiffening, heated face. They went, then, to Piccadilly Circus, and mounted a red horse-omnibus.

They jogged along to Hyde Park Corner.

"Get out here?" asked Cross.

"Not here," replied Shagger. These two words were the first he had uttered since the ride began.

"What's the matter wi' you, Shagger?"

"Surprised stomach," was the grim reply.

The omnibus lumbered on. Shagger sat leaning forward, his mouth set in a lipless line, his eager gaze ranging avidly over the tree-embowered prospect. Something of delight in his freedom began to warm his heart at last. The hectic beauty of the autumnal foliage; the lush, level greenness of the turf; the life and movement and colour so abundantly rife everywhere in each new opening vista, kindled a light of satisfaction in his jaded eyes; his cheeks mantled.

At the Broadway they alighted and entered a public-house: this at the instigation of Corner. Shagger gulped down a brandy-and-soda. The first effects of the draught were disquieting; but that passed, and he felt stimulated. He began to talk and to laugh. He even braved the horrors of another cigar. Then they left the place, boarded an electric car, and were conveyed to Kew Bridge.

They spent the later hours of the afternoon strolling beside the Thames. It was a fine evening. Twilight fell upon the placid scape like a soft breath of blessing, glorifying all things. The river shone with a pale sheen that made a rippling, red-flecked path pointing toward the westering sun. In the blue vault above the stars peeped forth benignly. The argent globe of the autumn moon poured out its glistening store of silver.

Cross Corner waxed sentimental, after the fashion of his kind. He protested that he felt for Shagger an affection passing the might of words. Shagger laughed. But he, too, was conscious of softening influences in the simple wonder of the gloaming. They turned and walked back toward the bridge,

spanned by a gentle arc of lights. Other gleams, yellow and wavering, pinked the misty distance. Behind the trees on the left bank a nacreous glare illumined the sky.

They returned to the pulsing heart of the city. Shagger nodded in his seat as the car hummed swiftly, smoothly eastward. He roused at Hammersmith Broadway; and there was nothing for it but they must pledge each other again. They must smoke again.

"I'm coming to life, Cross, coming to life," said Shagger, with a deep-seated chuckle, as they lolled in the tawdrily splendid bar. "You're a good pal, Cross. It's a rare world. We'll be happy to-night."

It was in this ebullient mood he continued on the journey. At Piccadilly Circus Shagger realised another dream when he swaggered magnificently into the Criterion bar. There were other noble sportsmen present in evening-dress, displaying tracts of unblemished shirt-front that cried aloud for a bill-poster.

From that resplendent scene they passed to a big stucco-fronted building in the near vicinity: a palace of brilliant lights and soft tones, with purviews of warm plushed vestibule beyond the broad white steps. The doors gaped like a red maw to engulf them. The man in the box-office liked not Corner's rough frieze ulster; but Shagger's gold overrode his prejudices. They passed noiselessly through mirror-lined corridors, throwing countless prismatic refractions, into the auditorium, and sat down.

It was all very familiar, yet strange, to Shagger. In the piping times of bygone days, when his luck was good and his pockets were lined with coin, he had often ruffled it here over his court of meaner scoundrels, parasites and toadies, all humbly bowing down before his larger personality. How he had exulted, at such times, in the consciousness of his own superior attainments. They were wild nights! My faith! Nights of red revelry to be lived over again, or so he vowed, in the unfettered future before him!

But as he sat watching the antic figures on the stage, his elation died in a stupid obsession of drowsiness. It was the prison hour for sleep. The habit of many years was still heavy upon him. He dozed.

The music crashed in his ears. Hurrying feet went back and forth. Voices rose and fell murmurously, fitfully. He dreamed. . . . And bitterly persuaded himself that he had just awakened from a dream. The walls of his cell closed in

about him. He saw the first dim flicker of light stealing in through the barred window, casting fantastic shadows on the floor. A bell rang. There was a grinding noise of drawn bolts. . . .

"Wake up, old man," said Corner, nudging him.

He opened his eyes and gazed vacantly about.

A woman was dancing on the dusty boards in the footlight flare. From behind him sounded a merry tinkling of glasses. There were hoarse masculine voices, rising and falling, bursting into occasional loud mirth. There was a swish of silk and embroideries; a tripping stir of mincing feet.

"Let's go home," he muttered thickly.

"What for?" cried Cross Corner; for he was one of those who, loving money for its worthless self, liked to enjoy its full purchasing value when he did part from it.

Shagger vouchsafed no answer, but rose and strode out of the music-hall. Corner, cursing profusely, albeit silently, followed him.

They left the West End and crossed the river, by Hungerford Bridge, to the Surrey side. Skirting the Westminster Bridge Road, they entered a narrow byway not far from Lower Marsh. Their ultimate destination was a little obscure shop. A smoky lamp hung in the window, revealing a few trays of horrible sweets and some filthy and decrepit toys.

"Looks the same as ever," Shagger remarked. "'Tain't even dirtier. Suppose it couldn't be."

Cross Corner pushed open the shop-door and entered. A cracked bell tinkled dolorously.

"All ages!" he called out to a hideous old crone who came hobbling out of the rear part of the premises. "Only me, Judy." And without a word the old crone hobbled back again and disappeared in the gloom.

Shagger Day yawned, stretching his long arms above his head.

"Where do I sleep?" he inquired. "Wi' the fleas?"

"Nice feather bed upstairs."

"Well, I'll have a tassel on the nightcap and get to it. What are you churning up your brains for? No liquor in the house?"

"Sorry, Shagger."

"Don't matter," said he. "Get some in to-morrow, that's all. I say, Cross, do you sell candles?"

"Got some, somewhere."

"Gimme half a dozen."

Corner gaped at him. "What for?"

"To eat, of course," said Shagger testily. "Come on, you mutton-headed old shyster. Bung 'em over."

Corner, with a puckered face, groped under the counter and brought up a handful of candles, all dirty, some broken. Shagger snatched them from him, stuffed them into his pocket. "Now show the way," he said.

Corner took the shop-lamp from its hook on the ceiling and preceded him upstairs.

"I shall be only a little lower than the angels, anyhow," remarked Shagger. "This it?"

He followed Corner into a big room on the top storey. It was shabby, but clean. The bed was of the old-fashioned postered kind, heaped high with mattresses and sheets and pillows. There were two chairs and a table.

"Got any books?" asked Shagger.

"Books?"

"Things you read, Cross. Leastways, you don't, I expect. I been wanting to read in bed for over eight years. Something interesting. Not Shakespeare."

"I'll see what there is," said Corner, who was too well used to the vagaries of men newly released from prison to be greatly astonished by Shagger's manifold whims. He shambled out of the room.

When he had gone Shagger extracted the candles from his pocket, set them up in a row on the mantelpiece, and lit them. He rubbed his hands and laughed delightedly, childishly, at the brave show they made. Then he began to pace the room, to and fro, slowly. As he trod each step he counted, thus: "One—two—three—four—five. One—two." Here he turned. "One—two—three—four—five. One—two." He turned again. Five minutes passed and still he continued his measured pacing. And it was noteworthy that, though the room was some eighteen feet in length, he did not once extend his course beyond half that distance. His restless figure, turning again and again on its tracks, was suggestive of that of some wild, caged beast. It was as if he were confined within invisible strong bars.

The shuffling sound of Corner's returning footsteps roused him from his moody exercise. He halted abruptly, uttered a low cry. He walked to the wall and began to sidle along it, that he might make the circuit of the room. He was rounding the table when Corner reappeared, laden with a pile of soiled volumes.

"Hullo!" he exclaimed, halting on the threshold and staring. "What the——?"

"You shut your face," growled Shagger, flushing.

He went on past the table, into the corner against the window, then by way of the hearth and the side of the bed, back to the door again.

"Potty, ain't you?" grinned Corner.

"What books are those?"

"All sorts. *Social Notes*, 1862 to 1864. *Sunday at Home*, 1882."

Shagger took them from him and put them on a chair beside the bed.

"That's all I shall require at present, my man," he said, with facetious gravity. "Let me sleep as long as I like in the morning. But when I bang on the floor bring me up a rum-and-milk and a jug of hot water. Oh, and some carpet slippers and a properly aired newspaper. Now you may go."

"Thank you, your lordship."

Shagger Day, left alone, began to undress with leisurely deliberation. He folded up each article of clothing, one by one, and placed them in a neat pile at the foot of the bed. His head was on the pillow before he remembered that to be orderly and methodical was no longer incumbent on him. He threw off the sheets, slipped out of bed, and proceeded to scatter his garments broadcast over the floor. Then, with a satisfied smile, he clambered in again.

His body sank into the soft feather bedding. The heaped-up pillows buckled under the pressure of his head. He dug his elbow into them, picked up a book at haphazard and began to turn the leaves.

It was very hot. The heavy blankets and thick counterpane weighed his body down, whilst the yielding surface of the mattress billowed up about him. He could not dispose his limbs comfortably; but tossed and shifted with cramped extremities, until he had reduced the bedclothes to a chaos of knotted lumps. He began to perspire. His cuticle pricked and tingled.

For a while, by a supreme effort of will, he would lie still and read. But soon he was contorting himself once more in a vain endeavour to find some ease. He could get none, nor rest for his itching, sweating body on that unaccustomed soft couch.

An hour passed, and his late drowsiness had given place to a feverish activity of mind and physical misery. He threw aside his book, turned on his back, and held his two clenched fists high above him in his impotent rage.

"So it seems I ain't served all my time yet," he said to himself, with a strangled sob.

He sat up and let his bare feet slip down on to the floor. He stood shivering in the cold currents of air from the window and from under the door. His weary flesh was aching as if it were bruised. His brain seemed numb with overmuch thinking. He craved surcease from his haggard plight in the sweet oblivion of sleep. And sleep was denied him.

Sighing, he dragged a blanket from the bed, wrapped it about him tightly, and lay down on the bare boards.

The Modern Belgian Poets

By the Count de Soissons

If one would like to judge *a priori* about the presumptive characteristics of Belgian poetry on the ground that he knows the Belgian people, or vice versa, to find in the works of poets the spiritual picture of the nation, he would be disappointed with and surprised at the contradictions which at the first glance are difficult to explain.

H. M. Agricola,* who for a quarter of a century occupied a diplomatic position in Brussels and studied the so-called Belgian intelligent class, passes this judgment on the Belgians: "The Belgians are cold and without noble sentiments; they are heartless and destitute of the enthusiasm which prompts great deeds. They are fond of food and still more of drink. The Belgian is a born *zvanzeur*. This is a purely Belgian word, and it means the one who sneers at everything. The so-called *la zvanze* is a poisonous element in the national organism. Let us add to this unattractive picture of the people the degradation of the lower classes by drunkenness, over-population, and the necessary result of its extreme utilitarianism, wild political factions and scandalous corruption, finally the thoughtless democratic *bourgeoisie*, and we have the field which to anybody would not seem proper for the development of poetry."

Consequently Baudelaire, who spent two years (1864 and 1865) in Brussels, was right, when in his biting pamphlet called *Amoenitates Belgicae*, he said that "there is no art in Belgium," and has shown the illiberality and narrow-mindedness of the Belgians. This was frankly affirmed by V. Gille, the editor of *La Jeune Belgique*, who said: "Our country was then inhospitable to authors. In that time only one poet dared (*sic*) to write and to publish. It was van Hasselt."

Baudelaire, however, while gathering materials for that acid booklet, had not noticed that round him there was growing the whole generation of the future Belgian poets who were going to understand him, to feel as he did and more, to choose him for their leader; he was not aware that that country about

* A pseudonym.

which he wrote a book full of insults and irony was going to produce the greatest number of his most able disciples and followers. It seems that the presence in Belgium of that *magnus parens* of contemporary poetry was like the fertilising dew that fell on the sterile field of art. Almost immediately after his death there came forth a legion of brave knights of the word, full of talent and enthusiasm.

I pass a number of prose writers who chronologically preceded the priest of the rhyme and who, as Charles de Coster, Octave Pirmez and Camille Lemonnier, could rival the best French prose writers. I am going to speak only about poets.

Among these I must mention at first a few who stand alone and suffered most by coming early. The sad story of those solitary ones, the precursors of later blossoming, was written by one of them, George Rodenbach, in his book bearing all the marks of an autobiography called *L'Art en exil.* A desperate fight with apathy, with the hatred and sneering of the people at large; the bitterness of a man feeling that his voice is like the sounds of a bell dying without echo in the mist; consciousness of life, the purpose of which is only—like the old slumbering, half-dead canals of Bruges—to reflect faintly the light, such is the content of those half-personal confessions of the poet, whose sensitive soul was withering under the influence of the compulsory isolation amidst a spiritual Sahara. Rodenbach was rescued from being completely disheartened by periodical excursions to Paris, where he found masters and friends, kinsmen of the same ideals and tendencies.

Paris was also a refreshing oasis for George Khnopff, who, however, after the exquisite cycles called *Chinoiseries*, became silent and then left Belgium. The others, more energetic, endowed with initiative and full of polemics in a higher degree, fought bravely in their own country, trying hard to conquer an independent position for their art. For this purpose they would contribute to different "young publications," which after 1870 appeared in great numbers, as they did also in France. Some of them started to publish periodicals by themselves. So Theodore Hannon was the editor of the *Artiste*, published in Brussels in 1876. George Eekhoud started two publications in Antwerp, *Pif-Paf* (1877) and *Rabelais* (1878). These efforts proved to be useful; a fresh breeze blew over the country, and although it could not disperse the mist of indifference, it aroused literary enthusiasm in the young generation. All over the country, among students, among young lawyers and artists, numerous literary and artistic clubs were started, periodicals

published, discussions heard, and the purpose of all this was the propaganda of new æsthetic ideas.

The University of Louvain was the most fortunate, for from thence came forth the greatest number of poets and there the strongest concentration of young forces was started, which at last succeeded in triumphing over the general thoughtlessness in literary matters. In 1889 and 1890 the animation was great. A handful of law students, amongst them Arenbergh, Gilkin and Verhaeren, started a weekly, *La Semaine*, which, contrary to the modern naturalistic doctrines then dominating in France, displayed the flag on which there was written—*en temps où c'était du chinois*, says Nautet—" art for art."

In the meanwhile Mauricius Warlomont—known since under the pseudonym of Max Waller—came to Louvain from Germany and started another weekly, *Le Type*. The two publications originated a fierce controversy which absorbed all the students to such an extent that the authorities of the university were obliged to interfere and to stop the publication of *La Semaine*.

When the editors—Giraud and Waller—left Louvain and went to Brussels, they met for the first time the young literati from Antwerp and Brussels; there also took place the concentration of the new artistic generation, at first in Camille Lemonnier's drawing-room; then in the columns, published and edited by him from October 1881 of the literary supplement to the daily paper *Europe*. In 1882 there appeared also two leading literary publications, *L'Art moderne* and *La Jeune Belgique*. The first was devoted to the theories of art in general as well as to the criticism of all manifestations in all branches of art; this paper was the cause of renascence of æsthetic ideas in Belgium. The latter became a stern herald and defender of new literary watchwords; round that hearth all true artists gathered without any consideration of school, direction, individual character, personal convictions: they were gathered under the flag of independent art, having its aim in itself, not serving any doctrine, either philosophical, or social, or political. Besides poets there was formed a phalanx of critics and æsthetes, such as Demolder, Destrée, Gilkin, Giraud, Maubel, Nautet, Verlant and others.

When *La Jeune Belgique* issued a manifesto calling all Belgian poets to collaborate for a collective book of poetry, Rodenbach, Verhaeren, George Khnopff and George Eekhoud declined to contribute, else the book published in 1887 under the title of *Parnasse de la Jeune Belgique* would represent the

exact picture of the contemporary poetical creative power in Belgium. However, notwithstanding even that drawback, it is one of the most interesting and important poetical publications of the last decade. There were eighteen contributors to the book, each giving a number of his poems, which furnish a very precise idea of the spiritual characteristics of each poet. From among them I would name at first Iwan Gilkin, Albert Giraud and Emile van Arenbergh ; then Theodore Hannon and Max Waller. In the second rank I would put Grégoire Le Roy, Charles van Lerberghe and Maurice Maeterlinck as forming one group, while the third group will include André Fontainas, Fernand Séverin and Valérien Gille. They were followed by Paul Berlier, George Garnir, Octave Gillion, Paul Lamber, Leon Montenaeken, Lucien Solvay and Hélène Swarth.

L'Art moderne and *La Jeune Belgique* were helped much by other publications which appeared in the country as the sign of increasing love for art. *La Société Nouvelle* and *La Wallonie* lasted the longest time, produced the strongest influence, published the greatest number of poems, and helped the concentration of new forces. The other publications of the same character were *Pleyade*, to which Maeterlinck and Lerberghe were constant contributors, *Le Mouvement Litteraire* (Brussels), *La Revue Blanche* (Liége), *Les Jeunes* (Namur), *Le Reveil* (Gand), etc.

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The modern Belgians are the result of a slow fusion of the two nations—united by chance—which formerly had nothing in common, then fused by exterior influences often diametrically opposite. Each nation contributed to produce the present spiritual physiognomy of the Belgians. The Flemish people, of Germanic origin, living on waste, low, damp plains, on which all speeches die without an echo in the emptiness of space, where in the misty atmosphere outlines become soft and instead the colours strike the eyes with unusual mobility and subtleness, were always remarkable for the lack of expressiveness, a silent wrapping in themselves, a certain aversion, or, perchance, an inability for speech ; then they were capable of leading a contemplative life bringing them near to mystics and showing the inward depth of nature and man.* The Walloons, in whom the Celto-Latin element is preponderant, living in the hilly country where the air is pure and outlines are more distinct, where winds blow in the valleys, the sounds are sonorous,

* Nautet, in his *Histoire des Lettres Belges d'Expression Française*, makes very interesting remarks in that respect.

brooks flow with noise over the stones, have opposite characteristics to the Flemings: they are lively and expansive, speak much, prefer active to contemplative life, are fonder of line and regularity than of colours and shades—in a word, they have all the characteristics of the Latin race.

The essential differences between these two races are embodied in the history of their spiritual development. In the beautiful old times the Walloons represented chiefly the literary element; while the Flemings assured their supremacy in the province of painting. Notwithstanding that the poetry—in times of its most glorious blossoming in the twelfth, thirteenth, fourteenth and seventeeth centuries—was especially encouraged at the courts of Brabant and Flanders, all the *trouvères* came from the countries constituting the present Belgium, and the poets of first magnitude, who, such as Chrestien de Troyes, Froissart, Jehan Lemaire, created the French poetry, followed by Rutebœuf, Villon and Ronsard, were Walloons.* As well as these Nautet† has a long list of others: Marvis, Béthune, Adenez, Martin Franc, d'Outremeuse, Crespiel, Gielée, Bodel, Canone; all these names are of Walloon origin and show the supremacy of that nation in the field of poetry, while in the domain of art we find—with a few exceptions such as Watteau and Villevoye—purely Flemish names: Memling, Rubens, Teniers, Van Dyck, etc.

To these peculiar characteristics of two races one must add the exterior influence. The present Belgium, situated between three countries, has been since the most remote times under the influence of three streams: Latin, Germanic, and Anglo-Saxon. The stormy waves would often cover the small country, but, while retiring to their historical beds, would leave some alluvium.‡ "It is very interesting to learn," says Nautet,§ "that the population of the Germanic origin—the Flemings—were always in close relation with France, while the Walloons, with the exception of the Hainault, were under the Teutonic influence." The German and Anglo-Saxon inundation left in the thoughts and imagination of the people some "intelligible reflex of the northern sky," while the frequent overflowing of the Latin stream brought undoubtedly elements of softer

* Van Hasselt, *Essai sur l'Histoire de la Poésie Française en Belgique.*

† *Histoire des Lettres Belges d'Expression Française.*

‡ Albert Giraud, *Enquête sur l'Évolution Litteraire*, in October Number, 1891, of *La Société Nouvelle.*

§ *Op. cit., Vol.* I., Chap. I.

manners, of brilliant culture, and has given to the poetry language and form.

After a long literary lethargy, which lasted over two centuries and was produced by political catastrophes and interior disturbances; by the exclusively practical activity of the Walloons as well as by the already mentioned lack of expansiveness with the Flemings, the present Belgium awakened and began the new intellectual life, when all the mentioned elements produced a literature quite different even from that with which it seems to have the greatest likeness. The life in common in a state originated not a long time ago by diplomacy; continual, obligatory intercourse; family connections; the same political and commercial interests; similar laws and institutions have removed, in a large degree, the former hatred of races and ethnographical contrasts. Only now all those different elements began to penetrate one another reciprocally, to modify each other and to fuse in one synthetic unity. In the province of literature the choice of the French language contributed to that purpose, together with the historical moment in which the new Belgian literature began to grow. It was the time when romanticism cleared itself of rhetoric and emphasis, became more subtle and quieter; when it threw away the last influence of classicism and became a receptacle of Latin and German thoughts. The modern Belgians were bound to feel the influence of the time. The awakening after such a long slumber was slow, but when at last the moment came, the creative forces accumulated during long years of lethargy produced magnificent results, and there came forth poetry, individual and national, for it is the combination of all those special principles and elements about which I have already spoken.

Instead of general remarks I am going to give now a short review of the poetical individualities which stand out distinctly in Belgian literature.

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George Rodenbach at the beginning of his literary career followed Baudelaire's modernism. In his first volumes, *La Mer élégante* and *L'Hiver mondain*, he appears as a poet of feminine elegance, a refined admirer of "powdered beauties," a singer of "the sad muse with artificial charms." He was then fond of boulevards and seaside places. Soon, however, his more mystic than sensual nature pushed him on different roads. He left Ostende for the deserted streets of Bruges, and in his

two following volumes, *La Jeunesse blanche* and *Du Silence*, he proved to be a remarkable, original poet of the old half-dead cities of Flanders; he rendered admirably not only their exterior colour, but also penetrated into their soul, reproducing with unrivalled skill the tone of deep quiet and melancholy sadness that characterise them. The only drawback of his work, especially of *Le Règne du Silence* and *Voyage dans les Yeux*, is a certain monotony of catalogue-like enumeration of impressions bound together by a misty, sad *Stimmung*.

Theodore Hannon, the author of *Les vingt-quatre Coups de Sonnets*, *Noëls fin-de-siècle* and *Au Pays de Mannekin Pis*, is a master of biting and sceptical observation, a poet of refinement and sensuality, a foe of banality under any form, a great admirer of exoticism and artificiality, a juggler of rhymes and rhythms, reminding one of Tristan Corbière by the paradoxicality of his pictures and metamorphoses, and of Théophile Gautier by his richness of form and colouring. Round him stand Lucien Solvay, Leon Montenaeken and Paul Lamer, as well as Paul Berlier, who differs occasionally by his philosophical reflections, together with Octave Gillion, who, however, stands nearer Rodenbach.

Hélène Swarth reminds one also of the latter by her elegance, while by her charm she is related to Waller, although she does not possess his biting qualities and bitter irony. At the first glance, Waller belongs to those who are fond of sensualism, of plastic impressions and exoticism, but when one looks more attentively one notices a great spiritual depth in every tone of his lute; there is a hidden tear under every outburst of his laughter, a drop of the poet's own blood under every lash of his satire. That union of laughter with tears, of the gaiety of an urchin with the melancholy of a dreamer, is undoubtedly the result of his childhood spent in Germany. He is one of the most original poetical individualities in Belgium, and his *Siebel's Flute* is the only volume of poetry in Europe that may compete with Heine's songs. With regard to technique, he does not know any difficulties and limitations.

Iwan Gilkin is a spiritualist, but he is also a sharp observer of the poisonous flora of large towns, "a painter of oddness and fascinating ugliness." He is before all a psychologist, and the principal characteristic of *La Damnation de l'Artiste* is a passionate curiosity for fathoming the within of souls and consciences. Although his *Litanies to the Beautiful* reminds one of Baudelaire's *Litanies to the Devil*, one must say, however, that the Belgian poet is not inferior to the Frenchman in the

originality of conceptions and the richness of his pictures; besides, Gilkin's poetic power differs from that of Baudelaire by the accent of eternal youth, by the peculiar freshness and novelty. He is before all a poet of thoughts, although pictures, rhymes, and outlines seem to be born in his brain at the same time as his ideas. He does not attribute any importance to paltry virtuosity, to aimless ornaments, and to the overgrown vegetation of phrases; he gathers despotically the words which seem to him necessary to render the artistic impressions, and he rubs them together with a skilful and patient roughness till they produce a stream of sparks. In *La Damnation de l'Artiste*, Gilkin has investigated poetical psychology, and in the second part of the book the investigation is replaced by philosophical contemplation, pictures of contemporary corruption with broad horizons of thoughts; while the third part, *Satan*, is full of dazzling and frightful beauty.

Emile van Arenbergh is a pure spiritualist. The proud apostrophe to the ocean and several sonnets bear an excellent characteristic of his talent—he is a poet of ideas. In his poems the thought dominates the form; one sees that all the riches of imagination, the whole magnificence of pictures, and the melodiousness of verses, are for him only a flower-bed in which he puts the beloved child of his spirit—the idea. Arenbergh differs from other poets in this, that one cannot find in his work any reformatory tendency: he follows former traditions and uses the old motives, which, however, does not prevent him from being one of the most remarkable representatives of the modern group of writers. By his perfection of form he stands near the French Parnassians.

Fernand Séverin's relationship to French modern poetry is more distant. The quality of his work reminds one of Lamartine's traditions, and still more of the epoch of Racine's great declamatory lyricism. He has not the rich, dazzling form of his Belgian comrades; his verses are broad but simple, and sometimes monotonous. In his poems there is not that irritating, ecstatic splendour of beauty which one finds in the majority of contemporary poets; with him everything is quieter, simpler, milder. Very often, on that account, the power of detail as well as the purity of the artistic charm lose; instead, however, the broadness of inspiration, the sweetness of lyricism and even the intensity of the whole work gain. The subject of Séverin's book *Le Lys*, as well as that of *Le Don d'Enfance*, is almost exclusively dreaming love; in both the spirit dominates the body; the mysticism, the sensuality; the white lily, the fiery rose.

In most cases the expression of that purest love is poetical meditation rendered with melancholy colouring. The majority of Belgian poets being of Flemish origin, their works bear the mark of Germanic influence; Séverin represents the pure Gallic element, shown in more sober and quieter colouring and in classical—in the French meaning—form.

Beside van Arenbergh and Séverin I place André Fontainas, the poet of the spring, of twilight, of freshness and scent —an excellent artist—and Valérien Gille, singer of dim lights, of soft faintings, of narcotic aromas and unusual loves. His poems *Jardin d'Amour*, *Les Sommeils*, *Les Sirènes* and *Le Messie suprême* permit one to draw that conclusion, while his *Château des Merveilles* is like a fragrant nosegay, like a caprice without any importance, like a small *étagère* full of playthings and *bibelots* created in a moment of fancy for the drawing-room of some little fairy Pompadour. André Fontainas in his first book, *Le Sang des Fleurs*, appears as a poet of youth, beauty, happiness and love; among other poets either concentrated mystically or inclined pessimistically he makes an impression of one of Ronsard's followers, who by chance found himself in the twentieth century. His second volume, *Vergers illusoires*, was, as it seems, the result of mixed and fashionable Paris ideas—where Fontainas now lives—the influence of Wagner, Mallarmé, Nietzsche and Schopenhauer, and, although the former individuality of the poet has not disappeared, there resound doubt, pessimism and rebellion against " eternal sound of vain reality," especially where the author follows Vielé-Griffin and Regnier. For this reason the book is lacking in unity of idea as well as of expression.

Emile Verhaeren, one of the most original and most powerful contemporary Belgian poets, proved in his book *Flamandes* to be a painter of extraordinary power. At the beginning he was influenced by French naturalism, but soon he passed from the elementary human sensuality to the heights of spiritualism, to the dominion of dreams and hallucination; mystery, the conundrum of destiny, the unknown, do not leave him at rest. After the volume of prose *Contes de Minuit*, in which the first story furnishes an explanation of the poet's evolution, he is quite different in his following volume of poetry *Les Moines*. Here he is still a painter, but behind his pictures there appears a mystic background on which one finds Baudelaire's shades. From that background come forth the realistic pictures of his following volumes, *Les Soirs*, *Les Débâcles* and *Les Flambeaux noirs*, which reveal the decomposition of the soul drowned

helplessly in bottomless depression, though the poet astonishes one by the might and the form of his poems. The traditional forms were not sufficient for Verhaeren, they trammelled his mad, unbridled visions, therefore he threw them away without hesitation and created for himself new forms, new language capable of expressing his barbarous, original conceptions; his verse is a kind of irregular melopoia, full of sobs and howling winds, in which bells are rung for the alarm, machines crash, millstones grind, big vans roll with deafening noise: it is *une clameur d'art sauvage*—a true marvel as far as barbarity goes.

After a complete bankruptcy of faith and hope, expressed in the above-mentioned trilogy, that visionary, with eyes dilated by awe in the presence of irony and the fragile vision of life, appears transfigured in *Les Apparus dans mes Chemins*. All the nightmares passed once more on the road of his imagination, and suddenly during the poet's extreme disenchantment, there appeared a light: the reminiscence of the faith of his childhood; dear shadows surround him, and one of them, the last among the dead, soars over him like a bird of light; in the radiant shadow of her wings the poet regenerates; St. George, "with a lance raised to God, like a large cross of faith," comes down to him and carries his heart to God. The gloomy landscape becomes suddenly bright and the book is ended by a canticle of Christian joy and hope. However, after a moment of rest and peace, the poet returns to the former gloom in *Les Campagnes hallucinées*, with this difference, that he brings out the inward state of his soul. The book was followed by *Les Villes tentaculaires* and *Les Aubes*. The village (physical life), formerly so important, is giving way to the town (cerebral life), and is dying, sucked out by the gigantic octopus which, instead of feelers and tentacles, advances to the most remote corners of the country its smooth, straight, practical, monotonous roads. The whole is full of gloom and power; some poems, such as *Le Fléau*, reminding one of Breughel, are of unrivalled beauty. His last book shows a continual progressive evolution, testifying that the poet is still full of creative force.

The four following poets, Albert Giraud, Grégoire Le Roy, Charles van Lerberghe and Maurice Maeterlinck, have much in common in their way of looking at the world and in expressing their thoughts and sentiments. All of them are visionaries, with this difference, that Giraud gives precise, distinct, plastic and rich pictures of past centuries, especially of the Renaissance; van Lerberghe calls forth in symbolic language the

visions of past unusual loves ; while Maeterlinck embodies in his poems the visions of the world beyond, or at least the world hidden from human senses and foreboded only by sensitive souls. All four of them one could call painters of words ; they are the true successors of the great Flemish masters of the brush, incomparable colourists, each of them, however, possessing a different palette. The richest is that of Giraud, who is the poet-painter of light *par excellence*, although he knows also how to use dark, heavy tones, full of power and intensity. Le Roy possesses soft, half-tone colouring, which, united with a longing peculiar to him, produces that which one can only express by the untranslatable German word *Stimmung*. Van Lerberghe is an excellent connoisseur of colours, and by skilful handling of them he obtains new and penetrating results. Maeterlinck is the master of dusk and shadow, by means of which he produces sensations difficult to describe—one might say painful and cruel. Maeterlinck, Giraud and van Lerberghe, beside being lyrical poets, represent also dramatic poetry in Belgium.

Albert Giraud's artistic success was gained by his capricious rondels *Pierrot lunaire*, in which one feels certain marks of Banville's and Baudelaire's influence. He appeared at once as a poet of light and a dreamer who does not care for reality and paints exclusively the enchanting microcosm of his imagination. His poems are creations of a young man who has not yet come into contact with the wretchedness of the world. This contact, however, was bound to occur, and the brutal reality appeared much more dreadful after the dream. The aversion towards the *multitude abjecte* of modern people expressed in a volume of prose, *Scribe*, burst out with all its power in the volume of verses *Hors du Siècle*. Intoxicated with the charm of heroic centuries, the poet broke off all connection with present times, except the thread of love which inspired him with some beautiful *cantilènes* as good as those of Baudelaire or Moreas ; he has given himself up almost exclusively to the painting of pictures of the past, contrasting them contemptuously with the greyness and paltriness of modern days. *Les dernières Fêtes* and *Sous la Couronne* express still the picturesque luxury of past times in which everything—crime as well as heroism—had warmer colours. However, above all these enchanting and dazzling visions there hangs a shadow of melancholy, the result of the conviction that the reality is inferior in comparison with the desires and longings it produces.

Le Roy's book called *Mon Cœur pleure d'autrefois* shows that he is a remarkable painter of tender reminiscences and visions of love, of the longing of the sweet *châtelaine* (the soul), who sees those whom she loves disappearing on the "roads that come out from our souls and vanish somewhere in the past." In one of his poems, Le Roy says that "the one who does not possess my whole heart will know nothing of my thoughts," and it seems that he will find many of those who possess his whole heart, for in every life there could be found moments of that longing, the chord of which he makes vibrate so charmingly.

Van Lerberghe, who unites the quality of a painter of words with a great intensive combination of sensualism and mysticism —the latter prevailing—as well as its consequence, viz., the sensual vision of spheres beyond the senses, opens new views on nature and human life.

Maeterlinck's poetical individuality could be judged only by *Serres Chaudes* and *La Quenouille et la Besace*, for after those two volumes he passed into the field of drama and remained faithful—except for some volumes of prose—to that kind of literary work. His first poems were published in *Parnasse de la Jeune Belgique*, and his principal characteristics were sweetness of sentiments and mystic flights; his workmanship was original and his form masterly, but it would be in vain to look there for a path leading into the depth of the poet's spiritual individuality. When *Serres Chaudes* was published Maeterlinck's poetical individuality appeared in its originality and independence; gross egotism was replaced by deep and tender altruism. It was only the first word of a spirit that had begun to grow original; the poet was not yet able to master himself and his art; he was intoxicated with his own sensations; his head was full of feverish visions, and all this flowing out from his pen produced poems of unheard-of intensity, but comprehensible only to the true lovers of art who knew how to penetrate into the author's unfathomable soul.

The book is very unusual, and it could be compared to a virgin forest, where, under thickly growing lianas and herbs, are hidden flowers of dazzling beauty and of intoxicating perfume.

Among Belgian poets Maeterlinck reminds one, more than any other, of Mallarmé. They are near each other by the exclusive closeting of themselves in the sphere of symbols, by the rather pictorial than musical qualities of their poems, by their

metaphysical aspirations, and by their indifference to the opinion of people at large, for they wrote only for a handful of those who are initiated in the mystery of their art.

Maeterlinck's thoughts gravitated, in a visionary way, to the eternal, to the absolute, to the essence of existence. All his rhymed and unrhymed poems possess an astonishing depth; they are taken from the gigantic spectacle of the manifestations of infinity, which is displayed before the keen and investigating eyes of the poet. He sympathises deeply with the gloomy destiny of man and the world; the pain of humankind and of the universe flows into his heart and brings out from his lips a moan awful in its simplicity:

"*Et la tristesse de tout cela, mon âme! et la tristesse de tout cela!*"*

However, the sadness does not discourage the poet, does not take from him his enthusiasm. Too early disenchantment giving way to sadness seems to him pitiful:

Je pleure les lèvres fanées
Où les baisers ne sont pas nés,
Et les désirs abandonnés
Sous les tristesses moissonnées.†

Notwithstanding that he is discouraged that his efforts are fruitless, he turns to the "Soul of the night," begging to be refreshed:

Mon âme en est triste à la fin;
Elle est triste enfin d'être lasse,
Elle est lasse enfin d'être en vain.
Elle est triste et lasse en fin,
Et j'attends vos mains sur ma face.

A moment of rest, a drop of refreshing dew and the poet goes further, only he has chosen a different road—that of the drama.

In order to have a complete picture of modern Belgian poetry, a few more poets should be mentioned. In the first place there is a group of Walloons: Albert Mockel, who has written the charming, as a whole, though slightly exaggerated, *Chantefable un peu naïve;* then two *trouvères*, whose charm is their naïve simplicity: these two are Gérardy, the author of *Chansons naïves* and *Pays de Joie*, and Rossenfosse, who wrote *Jardin de l'Ame*. Max Elskamp, an original author of *Dominical*

* *Ame.*

† *Désirs d'Hiver.*

and *Salutations dont d'angeliques*, has introduced into modern poetry the Gothic naïveté, mingled with childish simplicity. Count Albert du Bois revealed himself in *Les Rapsodies passionées* as one of the most gifted poets of the personal muse; it would be difficult to find a volume of generously enthusiastic poems inspired by the ideal of love and written with a greater sincerity. Carl Sluyts has written *L'Appel des Voix;* Fernand Bandaux is the author of *Rythmes vieux gris et roses;* while Paul Lacomblez is a *rara avis* for being a publisher—he is also the author of a volume called *Loth et ses Filles*. Delville, Dupont, Arnay and Boels complete the phalanx of the modern knights of the word.

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"As our painters," says Nautet,* "were less attentive to the beauty of the drawing, but had instead real ability for refined colouring, for finding immaterial elements in matter, for rendering the most subtle shades of light, and in that way of penetrating into the depth of things, in the same way our modern literature, full of sensations and refinement, excels in analysis, pictorial description, indistinct suggestions, and is remarkable by the depth of vision, by the infinite harmonies of shades—in a word, by a kind of expression which we have not taken from any other literature, which is our own property and constitutes the artistic field where we feel entirely at home."

In these words there is a lesson given to some young French writers, who, thinking that they have a right to absolute hegemony in literature, accused Belgian writers of taking advantage of the progress made by the young French generation of writers, and becoming, in consequence, but mediocre imitators. Nautet is perfectly right: Belgian poets are not indebted to their contemporary comrades. That which they have borrowed is to be found in other masters who served as an example to French symbolists as well; moreover, all foreign borrowed elements were accepted in Belgium with an astonishing consciousness and a great moderation, and only as much as they corresponded with an author's disposition, as much as they could be blended with the mentioned local characteristics, as much as they helped to produce something new and original. As to the exterior form, the majority of Belgian poets remained faithful to the old versification set in a code by Banville. Those, however, who like

* *Histoire des Lettres Belges d'Expression Française.*

Verhaeren, and sometimes Maeterlinck, would leave Parnassian correctness for the new technique of free verses and melopoia, do so rather under the pressure of their individuality than for the sake of following some French writers.

Baudelaire's poetical individuality is such a complexity of all human elements that it would not be surprising if there remained some reminiscence of him in every modern poet. He is undoubtedly the spiritual father of almost all contemporary French and Belgian poets. It would be unjust though to admit, with certain critics, that all the Belgian poets look at the world in the same way as Baudelaire did. For Belgian poets he was only a starting point, a stimulant which aroused all the hereditary elements that might be traceable to Van Eyck and Memling. Moreover, his complicated agglomeration broke into pieces which subsequently—with individual poets, or in groups united by some affinity—developed under the influence of individual aspirations, or of more general and local influences, into independent creative powers, united but slightly with their primitive source.

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The most general characteristic of the modern Belgian poetry is the total lack of any tendency which might conflict with a scrupulous homage to the pure idea of art for art. This should be looked upon as a negative influence of the people surrounding the poets, as a reaction against the vulgar everyday life and too great utilitarianism which fails to satisfy souls more richly endowed. The narrow-mindedness and vulgarity of public life, commonplace ideas and tendencies of the relatively ignorant democracy of our times, the fiendish disposition of that democracy towards everybody who rises above the level of gross materialism of aspirations and tendencies, prompted the pioneers of Belgian poetry to closet themselves within themselves, to be separated from the *profanum vulgus*, to search for something new, fresh, original, hidden in the depth of the soul, superior to vulgar interests, to listen to melodious sounds, to the enchanting new gospel of art. The poets, being unsatisfied with the vulgar surface, searched for depths and summits ; seeing that the high roads of human knowledge were beaten by the repulsive crowd, they looked for solitary and unknown paths which they found in their souls.

Under Western Eyes*

By Joseph Conrad

PART FOUR. I

THAT I should, at the beginning of this retrospect, mention again that Mr. Razumov's youth had no one in the world, as literally no one as it can be honestly affirmed of any human being, is but a statement of fact from a man who believes in the psychological value of facts. There is also, perhaps, a desire of punctilious fairness. Unidentified with any one in this narrative where the aspects of honour and shame are remote from the ideas of the western world, and taking my stand on the ground of common humanity, it is for that very reason that I feel a strange reluctance to state baldly here what every reader has most likely already discovered himself. Such reluctance may appear absurd if it were not for the thought that because of the imperfection of language there is always something ungracious (and even disgraceful) in the exhibition of naked truth. But the time has come when Councillor of State Mikulin can no longer be ignored. His simple question "Where to?" on which we left Mr. Razumov in St. Petersburg throws a light on the general meaning of this individual case.

"Where to?" was the answer in the form of a gentle question to what we may call Mr. Razumov's declaration of independence. The question was not menacing in the least and, indeed, had the ring of innocent inquiry. Had it been taken in a merely topographical sense, the only answer to it would have appeared sufficiently appalling to Mr. Razumov. Where to? Back to his rooms where the revolution had sought him out to put to a sudden test his dormant instincts, his half-conscious thoughts and almost wholly unconscious ambitions, by the touch as of some furious and dogmatic religion with its call to frantic sacrifices, its tender resignations, its dreams and hopes uplifting the soul by the side of the most sombre moods of despair. And Mr. Razumov had let go the door-handle and had come

* Copyright, 1911

back to the middle of the room asking Councillor Mikulin angrily, "What do you mean by it?"

As far as I can tell, Councillor Mikulin did not answer that question. He drew Mr. Razumov into familiar conversation. It is the peculiarity of Russian natures that, however strongly engaged in the drama of action, they are still turning their ear to the murmur of abstract ideas. This conversation (and others later on) need not be recorded. Suffice it to say that it brought Mr. Razumov as we know him to the test of another faith. There was nothing official in its expression, and Mr. Razumov was led to defend his attitude of detachment. But Councillor Mikulin would have none of his arguments. "For a man like you," were his last weighty words in the discussion, "such a position is impossible. Don't forget that I have seen that interesting piece of paper. I understand your liberalism. I have an intellect of that kind myself. Reform for me is mainly a question of method. But the principle of revolt is a physical intoxication, a sort of hysteria which must be kept away from the masses. You agree to this without reserve, don't you? Because, you see, Kirylo Sidorovitch, abstention, reserve, in certain situations, come very near to political crime. The ancient Greeks understood that very well."

Mr. Razumov, listening with a faint smile, asked Councillor Mikulin point-blank if this meant that he was going to have him watched.

The high official took no offence at the cynical inquiry.

"No, Kirylo Sidorovitch," he answered gravely. "I don't mean to have you watched."

Razumov, suspecting a lie, affected yet the greatest liberty of mind during the short remainder of that interview. The older man expressed himself throughout in familiar terms, and with a sort of shrewd simplicity. Razumov concluded that to get to the bottom of that mind was an impossible feat. A great disquiet made his heart beat quicker. The high official, issuing from behind the desk, was actually offering to shake hands with him.

"Good-bye, Mr. Razumov. An understanding between intelligent men is always a satisfactory occurrence. Is it not? And, of course, these rebel gentlemen have not the monopoly of intelligence."

"I presume that I shall not be wanted any more?" Razumov brought out that question while his hand was still being grasped; Councillor Mikulin released it slowly.

"That, Mr. Razumov," he said with great earnestness,

" is as it may be. God alone knows the future. But you may rest assured that I never thought of having you watched. You are a young man of great independence. Yes. You are going away free as air, but you shall end by coming back to us."

"I! I!" Razumov exclaimed in an appalled murmur of protest. "What for?" he added feebly.

"Yes! You yourself, Kirylo Sidorovitch," the high police functionary insisted in a low, severe tone of conviction. "You shall be coming back to us. Some of our greatest minds had to do that in the end."

"Our greatest minds," repeated Razumov in a dazed voice.

"Yes, indeed! Our greatest minds . . . Good-bye."

Razumov, shown out of the room, walked away from the door. But before he got to the end of the passage he heard heavy footsteps, and a voice calling upon him to stop. He turned his head and was startled to see Councillor Mikulin pursuing him in person. The high functionary hurried up, very simple, slightly out of breath.

"One minute. As to what we were talking about just now, it shall be as God wills it. But I may have occasion to require you again. You look surprised, Kirylo Sidorovitch. Yes, again . . . to clear up any further point that may turn up."

"But I don't know anything," stammered out Razumov. "I couldn't possibly know anything."

"Who can tell? Things are ordered in a wonderful manner. Who can tell what *may* become disclosed to you before this day is out? You have been already the instrument of Providence. You smile, Kirylo Sidorovitch; you are an *esprit fort.* (Razumov was not conscious of having smiled.) But I believe firmly in Providence. Such a confession on the lips of an old hardened official like me may sound to you funny. But you yourself yet some day shall recognise . . . Or else what happened to you cannot be accounted for at all. Yes, decidedly I shall have occasion to see you again, but not here. This wouldn't be quite—h'm . . . Some convenient place shall be made known to you. And even the written communications between us in *that* respect or in any other had better pass through the intermediary of our—if I may express myself so—mutual friend, Prince K——. Now I beg you, Kirylo Sidorovitch—don't! I am certain he'll consent. You must give me the credit of being aware of what I am saying. You have no better friend that Prince K——, and as to myself it is a long time now since I've been honoured by his . . ."

He glanced down his beard.

"I won't detain you any longer. We live in difficult times, in times of monstrous chimeras and evil dreams and criminal follies. We shall certainly meet once more. It may be some little time though before we do. Till then may Heaven send you fruitful reflections."

Once in the street Razumov started off rapidly, without caring for the direction. At first he thought of nothing; but in a little while the consciousness of his position presented itself to him as something so ugly, dangerous, and absurd; the difficulty of ever freeing himself from the toils of that complication so insoluble, that the idea of going back and, as he termed it to himself, *confessing* to Councillor Mikulin flashed through his mind.

Go back! What for? Confess! To what? "I have been speaking to him with the greatest openness," he said to himself with perfect truth. "What else could I tell him? That I have undertaken to carry a message to that brute Ziemianitch? Establish a false complicity and destroy what chance of safety I have won for nothing—what folly!"

Yet he could not defend himself from fancying that Councillor Mikulin was, perhaps, the only man in the world able to understand his conduct. To be understood appeared extremely fascinating.

On the way home he had to stop several times; all his strength seemed to run out of his limbs; and in the movement of the busy streets, isolated as if in a desert, he remained suddenly motionless for a minute or so before he could proceed on his way. He reached his rooms at last.

Then came an illness, something in the nature of a low fever, which all at once removed him to a great distance from the perplexing actualities, from his very room even. He never lost consciousness; he only seemed to himself to be existing languidly somewhere very far away from everything that had ever happened to him. He came out of this state slowly, with an effect, that is to say, of extreme slowness, though the actual number of days was not very great. And when he had got back into the middle of things they were all changed, subtly and provokingly in their nature: inanimate objects, human faces, the landlady, the rustic servant-girl, the staircase, the streets, the very air. He tackled these changed conditions in a spirit of severity. He walked to and fro to the University, ascended stairs, paced the passages, listened to lectures, took notes, crossed courtyards in angry aloofness, his teeth set hard till his jaws ached.

He was perfectly aware of madcap Kostia gazing like a young retriever from a distance, of the famished student with the red drooping nose, keeping scrupulously away as desired; of twenty others, perhaps, he knew well enough to speak to. And they all had an air of curiosity and concern as if they expected something to happen. "This can't last much longer," thought Razumov more than once. On certain days he was afraid that any one addressing him suddenly in a certain way would make him scream out insanely a lot of filthy abuse. Often, after returning home, he would drop into a chair in his cap and cloak and remain still for hours holding some book he had got from the library in his hand; or he would pick up the little penknife and sit there scraping his nails endlessly and feeling furious all the time—simply furious. "This is impossible," he would mutter suddenly to the empty room.

Fact to be noted: this room might conceivably have become physically repugnant to him, emotionally intolerable, morally uninhabitable. But no. Nothing of the sort (and he had himself dreaded it at first), nothing of the sort happened. On the contrary, he liked his lodgings better than any other shelter he, who had never known a home, had ever hired before. He liked his lodgings so well that often, on that very account, he found a certain difficulty in making up his mind to go out. It resembled a physical seduction such as, for instance, makes a man reluctant to leave the neighbourhood of a fire on a cold day.

For as, at that time, he seldom stirred except to go to the University (what else was there to do?) it followed that whenever he went abroad he felt himself at once closely involved in the moral consequences of his act. It was there that the dark prestige of the Haldin mystery fell on him, clung to him like a poisoned robe it was impossible to fling off. He suffered from it exceedingly, as well as from the conversational, commonplace, unavoidable intercourse with the other kind of students. "They must be wondering at the change in me," he reflected anxiously. He had an uneasy recollection of having savagely told one or two innocent, nice enough fellows to go to the devil. Once a married professor he used to call upon formerly addressed him in passing: "How is it we never see you at our Wednesdays now, Kirylo Sidorovitch?" Razumov was conscious of meeting this advance with odious, muttering boorishness. The professor was obviously too astonished to be offended. All this was bad. And all this was Haldin, always Haldin—nothing but Haldin—everywhere Haldin: a moral spectre infinitely more effective than any visible apparition of

the dead. It was only the room through which that man had blundered on his way from crime to death that his spectre did not seem to be able to haunt. Not, to be exact, that he was ever completely absent from it, but that there he had no sort of power. There it was Mr. Razumov who had the upper hand, in a composed sense of his own superiority. A vanquished phantom—nothing more. Often in the evening, his repaired watch faintly ticking on the table by the side of the lighted lamp, Razumov would look up from his writing and stare at the bed with an expectant, dispassionate attention. Nothing was ever to be seen there. He never really supposed that anything ever could be seen there. After a while he would shrug his shoulders slightly and bend again over his work. For he had gone to work and, at first, with some success. His unwillingness to leave that place where he was safe from Haldin grew so strong that at last he ceased to go out at all. From early morning till far into the night he wrote, he wrote for nearly a week; never looking at the time, and only throwing himself on the bed when he could keep his eyes open no longer. Then, one afternoon, quite casually, he happened to glance at his watch. He laid down his pen slowly.

"At this very hour," was his thought, "the fellow stole unseen into this room while I was out. And there he sat quiet as a mouse—perhaps in this very chair."

Razumov got up and began to pace the floor steadily, glancing at the watch now and then. "This is the time when I returned and found him standing against the stove," he observed to himself. When it grew dark he lit his lamp. Later on he interrupted his tramping once more, only to wave away angrily the girl who attempted to enter the room with tea and something to eat on a tray. And presently he noted the watch pointing at the hour of his own going forth into the falling snow on that terrible errand.

"Complicity," he muttered faintly, and resumed his pacing, keeping his eye on the hands as they crept on slowly to the time of his return.

"And, after all," he thought suddenly, "I might have been the chosen instrument of Providence. This is a manner of speaking, but there may be truth in every manner of speaking. What if that absurd saying were true in its essence?"

He meditated for a while, then sat down, his legs stretched out, with stony eyes, and with his arms hanging down on each side of the chair like a man totally abandoned by Providence—desolate.

He noted the time of Haldin's departure and continued to sit still for another half-hour; then muttering, "And now to work," drew up to the table, seized the pen and instantly dropped it under the influence of a profoundly disquieting reflection. "There's three weeks gone by and no word from Mikulin."

What did it mean? Was he forgotten? Possibly. Then why not remain forgotten—creep in somewhere. Hide. But where? How? With whom? In what hole? And was it to be for ever or what?

But a retreat was big with shadowy dangers. The eye of the social revolution was on him, and Razumov for a moment felt an unnamed and despairing dread, mingled with an odious sense of humiliation. Was it possible that he no longer belonged to himself? This was damnable. But why not simply keep on as before. Study. Advance. Work hard as if nothing had happened (and first of all win the silver medal), acquire distinction, become a great reforming servant of the greatest of States. Servant, too, of the mightiest homogeneous mass of mankind with a capability for logical, guided development in a brotherly solidarity of force and aim such as the world had never dreamt of . . . The Russian nation! . . .

Calm, resolved, steady in his great purpose, he was stretching his hand towards the pen when he happened to glance towards the bed. He rushed at it, enraged, with a mental scream: "It's you, crazy fanatic, who stands in the way!" He flung the pillow on the floor violently, tore the blankets aside . . . Nothing there. And, turning away, he caught for an instant in the air, like a vivid detail in a dissolving view of two heads, the eyes of General T—— and of Privy-Councillor Mikulin side by side fixed upon him, quite different in character, but with the same unflinching and weary and yet purposeful expression . . . Servants of the nation!

Razumov tottered to the washstand very alarmed about himself, drank some water and bathed his forehead. "This will pass and leave no trace," he thought confidently. "I am all right." But as to supposing that he had been forgotten it was perfect nonsense. He was a marked man on that side. And that was nothing. It was what that miserable phantom stood for which had to be got out of the way . . . "If one only could go and spit it all out at some of them—and take the consequences."

He imagined himself accosting the red-nosed student and suddenly shaking his fist in his face. "From that one though,"

he reflected, " there's nothing to be got, because he has no mind of his own. He's living in a red democratic trance. Ah, you want to smash your way into universal happiness, my boy! I will give you universal happiness, you silly, hypnotised ghoul, you! And what about my own happiness, eh? Haven't I got any right to it just because I can think for myself? . . ."

And again, but with a different mental accent, Razumov said to himself, " I am young. Everything can be lived down." At that moment he was crossing the room slowly, intending to sit down on the sofa and try to compose his thoughts. But before he had got so far everything abandoned him—hope, courage, belief in himself, trust in men. His heart had, as it were, suddenly emptied itself. It was no use struggling on. Rest, work, solitude, and the frankness of intercourse with his kind were alike forbidden to him. Everything was gone. His existence was a great cold blank, something like the enormous plain of the whole of Russia levelled with snow and fading gradually on all sides into shadows and mists.

He sat down, with swimming head, closed his eyes, and remained like that, sitting bolt upright on the sofa and perfectly awake for the rest of the night; till the girl bustling into the outer room with the samovar thumped with her fist on the door, calling out, " Kirylo Sidorovitch, please! It is time for you to get up!"

Then, pale like a corpse obeying the dread summons of judgment, Razumov opened his eyes and got up.

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Nobody will be surprised to hear, I suppose, that when the summons came he went to see Councillor Mikulin. It came that very morning, while, looking white and shaky, like an invalid just out of bed, he was trying to shave himself. The envelope was addressed in the little attorney's handwriting. That envelope contained another, superscribed to Razumov, in Prince K——'s hand, with the request " Please forward under cover at once " in a corner. The note inside was an autograph of Councillor Mikulin. The writer stated candidly that nothing had arisen which needed clearing up, but nevertheless appointed a meeting with Mr. Razumov at a certain address in town which seemed to be that of an oculist.

Razumov read it, finished shaving, dressed, looked at the note again and muttered gloomily, " Oculist." He pondered over it for a time, lit a match and burned the two envelopes and the enclosure carefully. Afterwards he waited, sitting perfectly

idle and not even looking at anything in particular till the appointed hour drew near—and then went out.

Whether, looking at the unofficial character of the summons, he might have refrained from attending to it is hard to say. Probably not. At any rate, he went; but, what's more, he went with a certain eagerness, which may appear incredible till it is remembered that Councillor Mikulin was the only person on earth with whom Razumov could talk, taking the Haldin adventure for granted. And Haldin, when once taken for granted, was no longer a haunting, falsehood-breeding spectre. Whatever troubling power he exercised in all the other places of the earth, Razumov knew very well that at this oculist's address he would be merely the hanged murderer of Mr. de P—— and nothing more. For the dead can live only with the exact intensity and quality of the life imparted to them by the living. So Mr. Razumov, certain of relief, went to meet Councillor Mikulin with the eagerness of a pursued person welcoming any sort of shelter.

This much said, there is no need to tell anything more of that first interview and of the several others. To the morality of a western reader an account of these meetings would wear perhaps the sinister character of old legendary tales where the Enemy of Mankind is represented holding subtly mendacious dialogues with some tempted soul. It is not my part to protest. Let me but remark that the Evil One, with his single passion of Satanic pride for the only motive, is yet, on a larger, modern view, allowed to be not quite so black as he used to be painted. With what greater latitude, then, should we appraise the exact shade of mere mortal man, with his many passions and his miserable ingenuity in error, always dazzled by the base glitter of mixed motives, everlastingly betrayed by a short-sighted wisdom.

Councillor Mikulin was one of those powerful officials who, in a position not obscure, not occult, but simply inconspicuous, exercise a great influence over the methods rather than over the conduct of affairs. A devotion to Church and Throne is not in itself a criminal sentiment; to prefer the will of one to the will of many does not argue the possession of a black heart or prove congenital idiocy. Councillor Mikulin was not only a clever but also a subtle official. Privately he was a bachelor with a love of comfort, living alone in an apartment of five rooms luxuriously furnished; and was known by his intimates to be an enlightened patron of the art of female dancing. Later on the larger world first heard of him in the

very hour of his downfall, during one of those State trials which astonish and puzzle the average plain man who reads the newspapers, by a glimpse of unsuspected intrigues. And in the stir of vaguely seen monstrosities, in that momentary, mysterious disturbance of muddy waters, Councillor Mikulin went under, dignified, with only a calm, emphatic protest of his innocence—nothing more. No disclosures damaging to a harassed autocracy, complete fidelity to the secrets of the miserable *arcana imperii* deposited in his patriotic breast, a display of bureaucratic stoicism in a Russian official's ineradicable, almost sublime contempt for truth; stoicism of silence understood only by the very few of the initiated, and not without a certain cynical grandeur of self-sacrifice on the part of a sybarite. For the terribly heavy sentence turned Councillor Mikulin civilly into a corpse and actually into something very much like a common convict.

It seems that the savage autocracy, any more than the divine democracy, does not limit its diet exclusively to the bodies of its enemies. It devours its friends and servants as well. The downfall of His Excellency Gregory Gregorievitch Mikulin (which did not occur till some years later) completes all that is known of the man. But at the time of Mr. de P——'s murder (or execution) Councillor Mikulin, under the modest style of Head of Department at the General Secretariat, exercised a wide influence as the confidant and right-hand man of his former schoolfellow and lifelong friend, General T——. One can imagine them talking over the case of Mr. Razumov, with the full sense of their unbounded power over all the lives in Russia, with cursory disdain, like two Olympians glancing at a worm. The relationship with Prince K—— was enough to save Razumov from some carelessly arbitrary proceeding, and it is also very probable that after the interview at the Secretariat he would have been left alone. Councillor Mikulin would have not forgotten him (he forgot no one who ever fell under his observation), but would have simply dropped him for ever. Councillor Mikulin was a good-natured man and wished no harm to any one, besides (with his own reforming tendencies) being favourably impressed by that young student, the son of Prince K——, and apparently no fool.

But as fate would have it, while Mr. Razumov was finding that no way of life was possible to him, Councillor Mikulin's discreet abilities were rewarded by a very responsible post—nothing less than the direction of the general police supervision over Europe. And it was then, and then only, when taking in

hand the perfecting of the service which watches the revolutionist activities abroad, that he thought again of Mr. Razumov. He saw great possibilities of special usefulness in that uncommon young man on whom he had a hold already, with his peculiar temperament, his unsettled mind and shaken conscience, and struggling in the toils of a false position . . . It was as if the revolutionists themselves had put into his hand that tool so much finer than the common base instruments, so perfectly fitted, if only vested with sufficient credit, to penetrate into places inaccessible to common informers. Providential! Providential! And Prince K——, taken into the secret, was ready enough to adopt that mystical view, too. "It will be necessary, though, to make a career for him afterwards," he had stipulated anxiously. "Oh! absolutely. We shall make that our affair," Mikulin had agreed. Prince K——'s mysticism was of an artless kind; but Councillor Mikulin was astute enough for two.

Things and men have always a certain sense, a certain side by which they must be got hold of if one wants to obtain a solid grasp and a perfect command. The power of Councillor Mikulin consisted in the ability to seize upon that sense, that side in the men he used. It did not matter to him what it was —vanity, despair, love, hate, greed, intelligent pride or stupid conceit, it was all one to him as long as the man could be made to serve. The obscure, unrelated young student Razumov, in the moment of great moral loneliness, was allowed to feel that he was an object of interest to a small group of people of high position. Prince K—— was persuaded to intervene personally, and on a certain occasion gave way to a manly emotion which, all unexpected as it was, quite upset Mr. Razumov. The sudden embrace of that man, agitated by his loyalty to a throne and by suppressed paternal affection, was a revelation to Mr. Razumov of something within his own breast.

"So that was it!" he exclaimed to himself. A sort of contemptuous tenderness softened the young man's grim view of his position as he reflected upon that agitated interview with Prince K——. This simple-minded, worldly ex-guardsman and senator whose soft grey official whiskers had brushed against his cheek, his aristocratic and convinced father, was he a whit less estimable or more absurd than that famine-stricken, fanatical revolutionist, the red-nosed student?

And there was some pressure, too, beside the persuasiveness. Mr. Razumov was always being made to feel that he had committed himself. There was no getting away from that feeling,

from that soft, unanswerable, "Where to?" of Councillor Mikulin. But no susceptibilities were ever hurt. It was to be a dangerous mission to Geneva for obtaining, at a critical moment, absolutely reliable information from a very inaccessible quarter of the inner revolutionary circle. There were indications that a very serious plot was being matured . . . The repose indispensable to a great country was at stake . . . A great scheme of orderly reforms would be endangered . . . The highest personages in the land were patriotically uneasy, and so on. In short, Councillor Mikulin knew what to say. This skill is to be inferred clearly from the mental and psychological self-confession, self-analysis of Mr. Razumov's written journal—the pitiful resource of a young man who had near him no trusted intimacy, no natural affection to turn to.

How all this preliminary work was concealed from observation need not be recorded. The expedient of the oculist gives a sufficient instance. Councillor Mikulin was resourceful, and the task not very difficult. Any fellow-student, even the red-nosed one, was perfectly welcome to see Mr. Razumov entering a private house to consult an oculist. Ultimate success depended solely on the revolutionary self-delusion which credited Razumov with a mysterious complicity in the Haldin affair. To be compromised in it was credit enough—and it was their own doing. It was precisely *that* which stamped Mr. Razumov as a providential man, wide as poles apart from the usual type of agent for "European supervision."

And it was *that* which the Secretariat set itself the task to foster by a course of calculated and false indiscretions.

It came at last to this, that one evening Mr. Razumov was unexpectedly called upon by one of the "thinking" students whom formerly, before the Haldin affair, he used to meet at various private gatherings; a big fellow with a quiet, unassuming manner and a pleasant voice.

Recognising his voice raised in the ante-room, "May one come in?" Razumov, lounging idly on his couch, jumped up. "Suppose he were coming to stab me?" he thought sardonically, and, assuming a green shade over his left eye, said in a severe tone, "Come in."

The other was embarrassed; hoped he was not intruding.

"You haven't been seen for several days, and I've wondered." He coughed a little. "Eye better?"

"Nearly well now."

"Good. I won't stop a minute; but you see I, that is we—

anyway, I have undertaken the duty to warn you, Kirylo Sidorovitch, that you are living in false security maybe."

Razumov sat still with his head leaning on his hand, which nearly concealed the unshaded eye.

"I have that idea, too."

"That's all right then. Everything seems quiet now, but those people are preparing some move of general repression. That's of course. But it isn't that I came to tell you." He hitched his chair closer, dropped his voice. "You shall be arrested before long—we fear."

An obscure scribe in the Secretariat had overheard a few words of a certain conversation, and had caught a glimpse of a certain report. This intelligence was not to be neglected.

Razumov laughed a little, and his visitor became very anxious.

"Ah! Kirylo Sidorovitch, this is no laughing matter. They have left you alone for a while, but . . .! Indeed, you had better try to leave the country, Kirylo Sidorovitch, while there's yet time."

Razumov jumped up and began to thank him for the advice with mocking effusiveness, so that the other, colouring up, took himself off with the notion that this mysterious Razumov was not a person to be warned or advised by inferior mortals.

Councillor Mikulin, informed the next day of the incident, expressed his satisfaction. "H'm. Ha! Exactly what was wanted to . . ." and glanced down his beard.

"I conclude," said Razumov, "that the moment has come for me to start on my mission."

"The psychological moment," Councillor Mikulin insisted softly—very grave—as if awed.

All the arrangements to give verisimilitude to the appearance of a difficult escape were made. Councillor Mikulin did not expect to see Mr. Razumov again before his departure. These meetings were a risk, and there was nothing more to settle.

"We have said everything to each other by now, Kirylo Sidorovitch," said the high official feelingly, pressing Razumov's hand with that unreserved heartiness a Russian can convey in his manner. "There is nothing obscure between us. And I will tell you what! I consider myself fortunate in having—h'm—your . . ."

He glanced down his beard, and, after a moment of grave silence, he handed to Razumov a half-sheet of notepaper—an abbreviated note of matters already discussed, certain points

of inquiry, the line of conduct agreed on, a few hints as to personalities, and so on. It was the only compromising document in the case, but, as Councillor Mikulin observed, it could be easily destroyed. Mr. Razumov had better not see anyone now—till on the other side of the frontier, when, of course, it will be just that . . . See and hear and . . . "

He glanced down his beard; but when Razumov declared his intention to see one person at least before leaving St. Petersburg, Councillor Mikulin failed to conceal a sudden uneasiness. The young man's studious, solitary and austere existence was well known to him. It was the greatest guarantee of fitness. He became deprecatory. Had his dear Kirylo Sidorovitch considered whether, in view of such a momentous enterprise, it wasn't really advisable to sacrifice every sentiment . . . "

Razumov interrupted the remonstrance scornfully. It was not a young woman, it was a young fool he wished to see for a certain purpose. Councillor Mikulin was relieved, but surprised.

" Ah ! And what for—precisely ? "

" For the sake of improving the aspect of verisimilitude," said Razumov curtly, in a desire to affirm his independence. " I must be trusted in what I do."

Councillor Mikulin gave way tactfully, murmuring, " Oh, certainly, certainly. Your judgment . . . "

And with another handshake they parted.

The fool of whom Mr. Razumov had thought was the rich and festive student known as madcap Kostia. Feather-headed, loquacious, excitable, one could make certain of his utter and complete indiscretion. But that riotous youth, when reminded by Razumov of his offers of service some time ago, passed from his usual elation into boundless dismay.

" Oh, Kirylo Sidorovitch, my dearest friend—my saviour—what shall I do ? I've blown last night every rouble I had from my dad the other day. Can't you give me till Thursday ? I shall rush round to all the usurers I know . . . No, of course, you can't ! Don't look at me like that. What shall I do ? No use asking the old man. I tell you he's given me a fistful of big notes three days ago. Miserable wretch that I am."

He wrung his hands in despair. Impossible to confide in the old man. " They " had given him a decoration, a cross on the neck only last year, and he had been cursing the modern tendencies ever since. Just then he would see all the intellectuals in Russia hanged in a row rather than part with a single rouble.

"Kirylo Sidorovitch, wait a moment. Don't despise me. I have it. I'll, yes—I'll do it—I'll break into his desk. There's no help for it. I know the drawer where he keeps his plunder, and I can buy a chisel on my way home. He will be terribly upset, but, you know, the dear old duffer really loves me. He'll have to get over it—and I, too. Kirylo, my dear soul, if you can only wait for a few hours—till this evening—I shall steal all the blessed lot I can lay my hands on! You doubt me! Why? You've only to say the word."

"Steal by all means," said Razumov, fixing him stonily.

"To the devil with the ten commandments!" cried the other with the greatest animation. "It's the new future now."

But when he entered Razumov's room late in the evening it was with an unaccustomed soberness of manner, almost solemnly.

"It's done," he said.

Razumov sitting bowed, his clasped hands hanging between his knees, shuddered at the familiar sound of these words. Kostia deposited slowly in the circle of lamplight a small brown-paper parcel tied with a piece of string.

"As I've said—all I could lay my hands on. The old boy'll think the end of the world has come."

Razumov nodded from the couch, and contemplated the hare-brained fellow's gravity with a feeling of malicious pleasure.

"I've made my little sacrifice," sighed mad Kostia. "And I've to thank you, Kirylo Sidorovitch, for the opportunity."

"It has cost you something?"

"Yes, it has. You see the dear old duffer really loves me. He'll be hurt."

"And you believe all they tell you of the new future and the sacred will of the people?"

"Implicitly. I would give my life . . . Only, you see, I am like a pig at the trough. I am no good. It's my nature."

Razumov, lost in thought, had forgotten his existence till the youth's voice, entreating him to fly without loss of time, roused him unpleasantly.

"All right. Well—good-bye."

"I am not going to leave you till I've seen you out of Petersburg," declared Kostia unexpectedly, with calm determination. "You can't refuse me that now. For God's sake, Kirylo, my soul, the police may be here any moment, and when they get you they'll immure you somewhere for ages—till your hair turns grey. I have down there the best trotter of dad's stables

and a light sledge. We shall do thirty miles before the moon sets, and find some roadside station . . . "

Razumov looked up amazed. The journey was decided—unavoidable. He had fixed the next day for his departure on the mission. And now he discovered suddenly that he had not believed in it. He had gone about listening, speaking, thinking, planning his simulated flight, with the growing conviction that all this was preposterous. As if anybody ever did such things! It was like a game of make-believe. And now he was amazed! Here was somebody who believed in it with desperate earnestness. "If I don't go now, at once," thought Razumov, with a start of fear, "I shall never go." He rose without a word, and the anxious Kostia thrust his cap on him, helped him into his cloak, or else he would have left the room bareheaded as he stood. He was walking out silently when a sharp cry arrested him.

"Kirylo!"

"What?" He turned reluctantly in the doorway. Upright, with a stiffly-extended arm, Kostia, his face set and white, was pointing an eloquent forefinger at the brown little packet lying forgotten in the circle of bright light on the table. Razumov hesitated, came back for it under the severe eyes of his companion, at whom he tried to smile. But the boyish, mad youth was frowning. "It's a dream," thought Razumov, putting the little parcel into his pocket and descending the stairs; "nobody does such things." The other held him under the arm, whispering of dangers ahead, and of what he meant to do in certain contingencies. "Preposterous," murmured Razumov, as he was being tucked up in the sledge. He gave himself up to watching the development of the dream with extreme attention. It continued on foreseen lines, inexorably logical—the long drive, the wait at the small station sitting by a stove. They did not exchange half a dozen words altogether. Kostia, gloomy himself, did not care to break the silence. At parting they embraced twice—it had to be done; and then Kostia vanished out of the dream.

When dawn broke, Razumov, very still in a hot, stuffy railway-car full of bedding and of sleeping people in all its dimly-lighted length, rose quietly, lowered the glass a few inches and flung out on the great plain of snow a small brown-paper parcel. Then he sat down again muffled up and motionless. "For the people," he thought, staring out of the window. The great white desert of frozen, hard earth glided past his eyes without a sign of life.

That had been a waking act; and then the dream had him again: Prussia, Saxony, Würtemberg, faces, sights, words—all a dream, observed with an angry, compelled attention. Zürich, Geneva—still a dream, minutely followed, wearing one into harsh laughter, to fury, to death—with the fear of awakening at the end. . . .

(*To be continued*)

How Germany Went to Morocco

MOMENTOUS events often owe their existence to absurdly slight causes, much more often than is commonly realised. Indeed, history as it is written, with its rhythmic sequence of cause and effect, motive, effort and achievement, is not a better exponent of hard fact than are the fulsome epitaphs on mediæval tombstones. Were events to be set down just as they come, with their purely haphazard origins and without the adorning nexus furnished by human motive—subsequently interpolated—it would read like a collection of illustrations for a book on the ironies of fate.

Examples are numerous. The following instance is at once piquant and topical, for it deals with the origin of the present phasis of the Morocco imbroglio. People have often asked wonderingly why Germany ever departed from her attitude of watchful aloofness towards that country. Her best statesman regarded the land of the Moors as an apple of discord wherewith to set England and France by the ears, just as Persia and Afghanistan seemed to him peculiarly adapted for the purpose of keeping mistrust and hatred between Russia and Britain continually simmering. That is one of the methods of German diplomacy. The answer commonly given to this question is that Prince Bülow struck out a line of policy very different from that of Prince Bismarck. He discerned the advantage of direct interference as a means of putting pressure upon France sufficient to make her pliant. In other words, Germany's present policy is part of a cleverly laid plan conceived by a statesman who saw things clearly and looked far ahead.

As a matter of fact, Germany's present attitude on the Morocco question is the result of a casual trip made very unwillingly by his Majesty the Kaiser, which in its origin and conception had as little to do with politics as had Tenterden steeple to do with Goodwin Sands.

But to begin at the beginning. Wilhelm II., long after Bismarck had quitted the scene of active politics, gave assurances many and emphatic that in Morocco he would step aside and let France move forward. M. Etienne, whom his Majesty received in audience, and to whom he is said to have spoken as frankly as if he were thinking aloud, was so impressed by this that he depicted Wilhelm II. with the aureole of the pacifist. And facts were seemingly on his side. Before the *entente* between this country and France was signed, the German Ambassador in Paris inquired of M. Delcassé, who then held the portfolio of Foreign Affairs, whether an agreement was about to be concluded touching Morocco. An answer affirmative and explanatory was returned, which Prince Radolin received with satisfaction. The French Minister's declaration he characterised as "quite natural and perfectly warranted." These words reflected the Kaiser's judgment and also that of the Imperial Chancellor. Within a fortnight Prince von Bülow rose in the Reichstag and delivered that historic speech in which he stated that, from a German point of view, he had no objection whatever to the arrangement. Germany's interests in Morocco being exclusively commercial, "we have no reason to apprehend that they will be overlooked or impaired." That was the keynote of Germany's *rôle* in the Moorish opera. There was no grudge against M. Delcassé then, no design on Shereefian territory, no question of a port on the Atlantic, or the cession of part of the French Congo.

On the contrary, M. Delcassé was in the odour of political orthodoxy. His *dossier* in the Berlin archives was quite creditable. He was believed to have twice declined the tempting offer formally made to strike up an alliance with Great Britain for defence against Germany, and this stout resistance to strong temptation was duly entered to his credit account. One enemy he had, and only one, Herr von Holstein. But no more formidable foe could be found in all the Fatherland. Holstein limned M. Delcassé as the bogey-man, the marplot, whose life-work was to set spokes in the wheel of Germany, and he had him classed among the "irreconcilables," where he has remained ever since. That, however, is by the way. The main point is that when France, in virtue of her agreement with Great Britain, formally assumed a preponderant political part in Morocco, Germany acquiesced, confining her preoccupation to her commercial interests, and accepted France's

readily given assurance that these would be respected religiously. That was the first act of the drama.

After this the curtain was rung up on a bit of romance which seems oddly out of place in a serious political drama. But it is truth—truth of the kind that sounds stranger than fiction, and is often much less credible. The month of March was well advanced. In Berlin balmy breezes were just beginning to awaken thoughts and feelings of spring in the minds and hearts of ordinary citizens, and Court officials were planning the Kaiser's Lenten cruise in the Mediterranean. Only the outline now needed filling in. What places should his Majesty touch at? "Why not pay a visit to Algiers?" asked one. "An excellent plan," remarked another; "it will give his Majesty an opportunity of . . ." "Tangier is the place the Emperor ought to call at; it offers many advantages," suggested another. This idea was new, bold, Wilhelmesque, so to say, and after a little discussion it was adopted. But with the advent of a critical geographer came doubts and misgivings, and the plan was seriously called in question. This gentleman's objection was grave. "Tangier cannot be included among the places of call," he said, "because there is not water enough in the roadstead to allow the *Hohenzollern* to anchor there." Here was a difficulty with a vengeance. It would never do to send the Imperial yacht to a place where the water was too shallow to enable it to enter. "But is it a fact that the water is not deep enough?" another inquired. Nobody could answer authentically. Finally, it was decided to address the question to someone on the spot.

From Berlin an urgent telegram was despatched to the German representative at Tangier, inquiring whether there was water enough in the roadstead to enable the Imperial yacht to anchor there. As this official possessed no cypher, the message was despatched *en clair*, and could be read by everyone in the telegraph office. The official, replying in the same way, stated that there was quite enough water to accommodate the Imperial yacht. That settled the matter. The plan was approved definitely; the Kaiser would visit Tangier. As yet, however, Wilhelm II. knew nothing about it. He had not been consulted. But it was assumed that he would raise no objection. In any case they would approach him on the subject.

Meanwhile the contents of the telegram had leaked out at Tangier, as all secrets are wont to do in such little places in the East. Ill-natured foreigners say it was the English who revealed them. More accurate observers set it down to people of another nationality. But the relevant point is that a journalist got hold of the news, and the *Times* was enabled to publish a telegram from Tangier announcing as imminent a visit of Kaiser Wilhelm to Tangier. The sensation was world-wide. Kaiser Wilhelm among the Moors! Vernal madness! This visit, politicians said, would be a much more disturbing factor in European politics than his Majesty's solemn entry on a white charger into Jerusalem or his symposium with Abdul Hamid had been. It would be a wanton provocation, said the French. Brief, the project seemed so freighted with dubious consequences that many doubted whether it would be carried out.

Among the personages to whom the announcement came as a stunning surprise were the Imperial Chancellor and his august master, to whom the principal *rôle* in the political adventure was assigned. And the Kaiser's astonishment was tinged with annoyance. He resented the liberty taken. He had given no thought to politics in connection with his coming cruise, certainly none to *la haute politique*. It was to be a cruise and nothing more. Individuals, French, American, or others, he might, of course, receive, as he had done so often before, and enjoy a quiet chat *de omnibus rebus et quibusdam aliis*. But to turn a much-needed holiday into an international demonstration and cause a flutter of trepidation among the friends of peace throughout the world! No, this was too much. He would not join two aims so desperate as private pleasure and international politics.

Besides, he had disinterested himself and his Government politically in Morocco. Had he not charged Prince von Bülow to declare that Germany acquiesced in the Anglo-French agreement on the international status of that realm? This important declaration had been made only a few days ago. How could he now embark on an undertaking which would belie all this, and perhaps jeopardise the peace of Europe? In truth, he had gone much further. France had received positive encouragement from Germany to go ahead. The

Kaiser had often alluded to Morocco as French, doing it deliberately and with a purpose. In conversation with the military attaché of the Republic, for example, he had employed the phrase "Votre Maroc," with emphasis, and gazing intently into his hearer's sparkling eyes the while. The Emperor knew, could not but know, that these words which were honey-drops to a French officer were reported to the Government of the Republic, and had been taken to heart by the President and the Ministers. And could he now unsay and undo all this? Evidently not. *Noblesse oblige.* Besides, why should he? His views had undergone no change. Nothing had happened to modify them. His court officials had gone too far. They had acted with zeal unweighted with discretion. It was rash on their part to venture into the sphere of politics without taking a competent guide. They ought to have consulted somebody—Herr von Schoen, for example. True, Herr von Schoen was absent. . . . Well, in any case the Emperor's mind was made up. He would set his face against the project. The cruise would be nothing but a cruise as it professed to be. He would touch only at harmless ports and steer clear of Tangier.

At this conjuncture Prince von Bülow enters on the scene. Having learned from the *Times* telegram that the Kaiser had decided to see Morocco for himself, the Imperial Chancellor asked for an audience. He was received. "I have come," he said, "to offer my loyal and respectful congratulations to your Majesty on the brilliant idea you have conceived of affording the Moslems of Morocco an opportunity of doing homage to the powerful friend of the Caliph of all Islam. They will appreciate it thoroughly, and so will your Majesty's subjects at home, for it will do more to raise the prestige of the Empire than anything your Majesty's Government could have suggested. It is in truth a brilliant *coup*."

But the Kaiser knitted his brows, listened coldly to his Chancellor, and responded in a different key. He replied that the idea was nowise his. He had neither originated nor approved it. Neither would he carry it out. He would not go to Tangier. Such a visit would do more harm than good. It would run counter to the Imperial policy announced and pursued heretofore. In a word, the Kaiser showed himself

resolutely adverse to the scheme. The Chancellor insisted, giving reasons for his view and endeavouring to weaken those adduced by his sovereign. The Emperor, however, turned the conversation, and soon after the Chancellor departed. But Prince Bülow did not let the matter drop. He spoke of it to several courtiers who had frequent intercourse with his Majesty, and he urged them to recommend it. Patriotism prompted his action and would warrant theirs. Some of them mentioned the subject to the Kaiser, but stopped short when they found that they were knocking at a closed door. None of them received encouragement, and some met with rebuffs. The Emperor seemed determined not to reconsider his refusal.

Meanwhile, preparations, official and unofficial, for the cruise went on apace. Abroad it was assumed that the Kaiser's visit had been decided upon. But this was an error. Even those who were to accompany his Majesty, and who met in Berlin, had to admit among themselves that the programme was an unknown quantity. Would they or would they not touch at Tangier. Apparently not. Comparing notes, they elicited the fact that the Emperor had not said or done aught that could be construed as a token that he had changed his mind. And there was not the slightest reason for assuming that he had been won over to the plan but was keeping his conversion secret. Presumably, they would not land in Morocco. The scheme was given up. It was with this conviction that they quitted Berlin and started on their journey. All this time the monarch had been reading with intense interest the leaders and special articles which the tidings of his intended visit to Tangier called forth at home and abroad. Prince von Bülow took care that his Majesty should see every note and comment calculated to convince him of the wisdom of going to Morocco, and he had but to wish for such articles and they filled the papers forthwith like flowers called into existence by the wand of a magician. But the Emperor read in silence.

The cruise began well, but brought no change. The subject of Tangier was tabooed on board. The Imperial yacht touched at Lisbon and anchored there. But there was no symptom pointing to an intention on his Majesty's part to land on the soil of Morocco. At last the time allotted to Lisbon was up.

The *Hohenzollern* weighed anchor. The vessel began to move out of the Tagus, slowly at first, then more rapidly, and all at once the news spread: "The Emperor has given orders to make for Tangier. We are going to Morocco, then, after all." What had influenced the Kaiser to forgo his resolve and do the bidding of his Chancellor? Was it the arguments marshalled by Prince von Bülow? Was it the advocacy of the courtiers, or the approval lavished in advance by the Press? Probably no one will ever know.

Was the Kaiser then really converted to the plan he had so resolutely opposed? No, not yet. At least not wholly. He was entertaining it, weighing pros and cons, peering ahead and looking backwards, counting up the cost. But he still wavered. He had not yet fully made up his mind. The *Hohenzollern* was meanwhile bearing him rapidly nearer to Moorish waters. The critical moment was approaching. The vessel steamed into the roadstead of Tangier. Here, at last, was Morocco. What would the next step be? The weather was unfavourable on the last day of March, 1905. The water was the reverse of smooth, foam-crested waves caused the lighter craft to rise and fall, and the wind was freshening. The Kaiser still hesitated whether to land or to return without setting foot on the territory of the Sultan. He watched and waited. Meanwhile, the foreign vessels stationed at Tangier saluted the *Hohenzollern* and the commanders went on board to pay their respects to the Imperial visitor.

And now comes one of the cruellest strokes of irony in the story. The French commander received a superlatively warm welcome from the Kaiser. He was a genuine, rough sea-dog, a latter-day Jean Bart, whose breezy, seamanlike frankness could at a moment's notice be transformed into dare-devil prowess. The Kaiser plied him with questions on naval subjects, and seemed delighted with his pithy replies and the way in which they were given. Then suddenly came the fateful query. Pointing to the roughening water the monarch asked: "Is it possible to land to-day without danger?" The answer was an emphatic affirmative, an affirmative that came with the cheery tones of an incentive that whets desire. And it was that reply which settled the matter. Thereupon, the Kaiser issued the order to man the launch and prepare to go ashore. In

this way the cause was set operative of all the subsequent international trouble which brought Europe in sight of war, and still trails its slow length along. The irony of fate willed it that it should be an honest Frenchman devoid of political guile who turned the scale with his "*Possible? Mais assurément. Pourquoi pas?*"

The Kaiser went ashore, and Tangier was transfigured. The streets appeared clean—for this occasion only. From the balconies hung many-coloured flags, crowds of graceful figures in flowing draperies of white filled the narrow thoroughfares. Si Abdul Malek Mulai Hassan, the Sultan's uncle, appeared to welcome the Imperial visitor, and brought gifts of horses, oxen, sheep, and other offerings galore. The Emperor mounts his charger. As he moves forward a French lady throws a tricolor bouquet to which a long train of crape is attached—a reminder of the lost provinces. The Imperial charger, startled, rears his hind legs. At last the Kaiser starts on his two hours' visit. It was during those two hours that he declared that the Sultan of Morocco is "an absolutely independent sovereign," and that he, Kaiser Wilhelm, would treat directly with him. The semi-official Press in Berlin took their cue from these words, and an anti-French campaign was inaugurated which led to the fall of M. Delcassé, the diplomatic conflict with M. Rouvier, the conference of Algeciras, and the present entanglements.

Such is the genesis of Germany's Moroccan policy. The German nation, as a whole, are entirely ignorant of its origin, and we, of course, regard it as part of the Emperor's genial statesmanship, whereas in reality it was as sudden and accidental as was the famous telegram to President Krüger. They call it "Plötzlichkeit-politik" in German. It may be styled the policy of the unexpected.

And when people ask, "What is Germany seeking in Morocco, what deep-laid plot of demarcation or expropriation has she laid there, is it a port she wants, a coaling station, mines, land, or what?" the true answer is quite as simple and, to the general, quite as unexpected. As it was chance that took the Emperor to Morocco, so now he uses it in exactly similar fashion, suddenly, unexpectedly, at haphazard, as a pawn in the *Kriegspiel* of diplomacy, for this and that purpose.

He sticks to it because out of the medley of international condominium something assuredly will issue. It may be a port, a concession, an actual demarcation of sphere of influences. That is not the question. The question is that some good, some benefit must inevitably accrue to Germany. It must, because with her power, and her recent *rapprochement* with Russia, the German and Austrian armies are the controlling influence on the Continent. It has been well said that Germany occupies the same position in Europe to-day as did Napoleon after Jena. And it is the key to the whole situation. That being so, the Moroccan question may be viewed quietly. Neither France nor Germany desires a war about Morocco. The entire situation is one of diplomatic bluff, out of which Germany, with her major power, confidently anticipates some substantial compensation.

That is the right way to look upon the whole matter. From the German point of view there is much to be said in support of the Emperor's Moroccan policy. Morocco is a rich, a splendidly potential country, and there are two distinct seaboards to boot. France not being the only country interested there, Germany may well say: "If others, why not the Germans?" And, indeed, were it not for the ethical side of the matter, ethical so far as the word can be applied to diplomatic treaties, agreements, and paper signatures, there can be little doubt that in the scramble for influence in Morocco Germany has as much human right to be there as has, say, the civilization of Catholic Spain.

Nor, from our point of view—from the military point of view, of course—would it seriously matter to us if France agreed to present Germany with a port, or, indeed, gave her such sphere of influence as she might please. A port in Morocco would decentralise the German Navy. It would be a source of weakness to Germany in time of naval war. From the English standpoint it is ludicrous to pretend that we have any reason to complain if the defensible area of Germany is extended. The very contrary is the case. The more Germany enlarges her line of defence, the more vulnerable, in time of warfare, would she be to us. It may be said outright that Germany's ensconcement at Agadir would materially weaken her naval arm.

That, however, is not the question, nor, however much we may sympathise with German ambitions, can we support her in a policy aimed primarily and essentially at the invalidation of solemn international treaties and covenants. And this is the root of the trouble. We are bound to our friend and ally, France, and we stand to her loyally according to the agreement; and it is this that German statesmen will not understand. For see what they have done. It is not once, but on three distinct occasions that they have broken the agreement entered into about Morocco, just as suddenly and without notification Germany recently broke the Treaty of Berlin in support of Austria.

The really serious part in the Moroccan affair is this disposition of Germany to invalidate international treaties at will and pleasure, for here the ethical side of diplomacy is offended, and things that are inherently immaterial in themselves assume the gravity of serious crises. On three occasions Germany solemnly entered into agreement with France regarding the problems and respective rights in Morocco, accepting the principle of international control, and three times now she has cast her agreement to the winds. On each occasion the Moroccan question has become a grave international concern, because there are other signatories to the agreements, and if treaties are to have any value at all it is considered wise to adhere to them. The question arises: Why does Germany enter, apparently loyally, into agreements if she reserves the right to break them? And the corollary presents itself: What is the use, therefore, of entering into agreements with Germany if she has no intention to respect them? And that is, in fine, the problem.

It is also the danger, almost, one might say, the sole danger, kept with perpetual gravity over Europe. The German answer is, of course, well known to all serious students of foreign affairs, and it is that force is the ultimate reason of State, while treaties are but the expression of circumstance and conjuncture, which are the two weapons of diplomacy. Such was Bismarck's statecraft, as we know, but it implies a position of continual unrest. It is the cause of the suspicion with which German policy generally is regarded. It was the reason why, some time before the *entente* with France, Prince Bülow

rejected Mr. Chamberlain's direct overtures. It is the reason why we are compelled to see in the rapid growth of the German Navy a potential challenge to us.

This is the lesson of the Moroccan imbroglio which, so far as Morocco is concerned, is Hecuba to Germany. The pivot of the situation is the German Army and the lack of an English one. That fact and that want may be said to reduce the danger of war to a minimum—the solution would seem as far off as ever. With Spain jealous of her rights, and Germany entirely indifferent to the morality of treaties, it may be questioned whether France would not do well boldly to summon another conference and see what general policy of demarcation and compensation could be arrived at, satisfactory and binding to all the signatories. As it is, the Morocco business is a dangerous and silly tangle of discord seriously discreditable to the enlightened civilization of Western peoples. It is the case over again, though on a far smaller scale, of Africa, of China. Morocco is a country without a road or a wheel, the only really barbaric land in Europe to-day, where there are dates but no women. That Europe should be plunged in perpetual scares and alarums about such a question is unworthy of this marvellous scientific age; yet as it is useless to deny the reality of the situation, so it is foolish to deny its gravity. The Moroccan question is serious, because the authority of France is not accepted by Spain, and because Germany accepts no authority; because both Germany and France are relying too much upon the certainty of inaction, which has always been the spring-board of the unexpected.

The British Merchant Seamen

By H. M. Tomlinson

THE break in the circulation of our overseas traffic by a strike, first of the sailors and firemen, and then, through sympathy with the seamen, of the stevedores, dock labourers, carmen, and other transport workers—the first stoppage of its kind in our industrial history, best illustrated by those mail-bags brought to the quay at Liverpool and then returned to the post office because nobody would touch them; and by the immediate rise in the price of food-stuffs—this stoppage, though it was but partial, and though the men gained little by it, is the most significant of the many phenomena of unrest in the mass of the indistinguishable ciphers who are expected to keep the world's mills going, but otherwise count as noughts. Though the Congress of Transport Workers at Copenhagen last year passed a resolution on international action and the sympathetic strike, the most expectant rebel in economics felt Copenhagen was rather remote. Nobody looked for this strike. Certainly the officials of the Shipping Federation, that association of European shipowners controlling the bulk of British shipping, did not expect it. And the officials of the Sailors' and Firemen's Union were, perhaps, the most surprised witnesses of the size and enthusiasm of the first meeting of discontented sailors in London, when the strike was proclaimed. Of late years, Mr. Havelock Wilson's affairs have not been fortunate, his union has been considered dead, and at his open-air meetings (a score of listless seamen on each occasion) there have been usually a few men present who had awkward questions to ask their chief. Knowing what a meeting of sailors is like, its usual listlessness and hopelessness, that big meeting of the discontented astonished me when I saw it, just as it did the men's leaders. Quite evidently there was trouble brewing. There is no doubt the leaders of the men's trade union had no more to do with that mutiny of the ship-workers, in the first place, than the planets. For, anyhow, only a small number of the seamen were, or are, members of the union; in fact, the seamen, for obvious reasons, never will

become strong through any deliberate organization. That is the most significant feature in the affair. It was the event which swept up those officials; they had to run after the men, persuading them to be moderate. I heard them at it. Only a vast unrest, an anger smouldering under an accumulation of grievances, a rankling injustice generally felt, explains that strike. Right at the back of the matter, the public, which really has reasons for alarm at the state of industrial conditions in the merchant service, if it but knew, must thank the Shipping Federation—as representing the majority of the shipowners—for this revolt of the sailors and dock labourers. The men, in their own words, "have had about enough of it."

The trouble is over now, so the newspapers explain. I think the trouble has only begun. There is more to come. There has been a little sporadic skirmishing; and the men have discovered what strength they have. Here perhaps I ought to make it plain that probably there is not an officer in the sailors' union who knows my name. But I know the men, I think, as well as their leaders know them. I have no interest to serve in this. Merely, I am of a shipping parish which once took some pride in supplying British seamen, and I am of the folk who once were sailors there.

Broadly speaking, all the public knows of the modern British merchant seaman is that he is often not British, and that, as aforetime, he gets drunk and gets drowned. It is remembered that our mercantile marine is our greatest industrial asset; and that again—a surprising fact this—when the Russian cruiser *Gromoboi* captured a British steamer in the East, during the war, it was reported that the British crew cheered their captors, the British crew being Germans. The public is aware, too, that though the bulk of the world's oversea freights is carried under the red ensign, yet still it is fairly difficult to get a boy to sea. The public is vaguely concerned by the letters of British shipowners which appear from time to time in the Press, letters explaining the British seaman as an unreliable fellow, too fond of beer, and that the Chinaman is a far more steady chap. Most of what is known of the lot of the merchant sailor is got from novels and books of romantic travel. I imagine the idea entertained by people generally is that a man chooses work at sea as a sort of adventurous pleasure. The man who goes to sea surrenders the opportunity he has with his fellows for a probably long, dull, and safe life ashore, for some picturesque excitement, probably brief. He is not content, like you and I, to endure the same secure monotonous

round until workhouse time, but elects for the short and merry life, and to die with his boots on, splendidly, in a fine cataclysm of the elements. It is very romantic. Of course, it is not true. The life of a sailor is more monotonous, squalid, and repellent, especially in the usual tramp, than that of most badly paid labourers ashore. It is not in the least chromatic. His hardships, too, which read so engagingly when treated by an artist who has suffered, are really hardships after all. It is thrilling to read an account, by a gifted sailor, of the beat to windward of a sailing ship westward bound round Cape Horn in winter; the persistent gales, the snow squalls, the head-seas moving express and gigantic. But to regard that dismal and terrifying chaos, the "all hands" as a common order, the sea-boils which eat to the bone, the deck as a place of sweeping cataracts, the gear sheathed in ice, and the sails, when one went aloft to help in shortening them, frozen as hard as iron; the coarse food, never properly cooked because the galley fire would not go; and the bed never dry—to regard things like that as what must be expected, at times, as the necessary conditions of your labour, labour for which you cannot obtain a better price, when a fully qualified worker, than about £4 a month and your food, must deter rather than induce a man who has been through it all, and is still looking about him for the means of daily bread. It seems quite necessary to explain to a maritime nation that a ship does not go to sea for romance, but just for profit, and that her crowd are not with her for spice to their lives, but for wages only. A ship and her crew, in that respect, being like a cotton mill and its hands.

I know there are born sailors, fatalists to a man these, and admirable and even noble fellows very like the old man Singleton in Conrad's "Nigger of the *Narcissus*," who regard the acts of shipowners, which spring, of course, from nothing more obscure than the desire to get a maximum of profit at a minimum of expenditure, as being merged in the spacious loom and dread of the elements, a mystery of God; something a man should endure stoically, as a man, keeping his mouth shut, while ships and the great waters remain. That is very fine. And what a ripe world it would be for all employers, if avarice were commonly mistaken for the unalterable cosmic frown. Ashore, however, we have long been busy distinguishing between preventable and inevitable ills. But the sailor, who has no existence politically, has always accepted his lot, after some futile grumbling, as in the wicked nature of things, with

the result that the conditions of his work are what would now cause a revolution ashore, where the toiler is becoming rapidly more determined to have a larger slice of the good things in the only life he may get.

The conditions of life afloat are keeping good men away from the sea. What shipowners offer for service is such that it would be impossible to find enough experienced Britishers to man all vessels under the red ensign in port to-day. First the Britisher was driven to hate the handling of ships, and now, largely, he has lost the knack of it. The work is so uninviting to-day that Lascars and Chinamen are getting to be the only men who will accept it readily. Until quite recently—environment afloat has slightly improved of late—more than a third of the men who manned our merchant ships, apart from the officers and engineers, were aliens. It is still a common thing to find not an Englishman in a vessel, outside the executive staff. Ships have been lost for that reason. The crews have not understood the orders, because given in English. This curious scandal became so gross and dangerous that at last it was impossible for the Government to ignore it—I suspect the influence of the underwriters in that—and so in January, 1908, a " language test " came into force. Before he could be accepted as one of a crew, a man had to prove he could understand orders given in English. The language test, for certain reasons, is easily avoided by the Chinaman, who is still, in increasing numbers, supplanting white labour on British vessels. The Chinaman does not know English any better than he did before the test. But he has the inestimable virtues of cheapness and docility—those finer qualities in a labourer ; and a shipowner is one of the greater powers in politics, so he gets his Chinamen, in spite of tests. That language test may stand as a classic instance of what happens to any industry in which the masters have vast wealth and political importance and the workers are of no weight and value to any political party. It marks about the lowest depth of degradation. Its irony would be devastating to an enlightened and sensitive nation jealous of its reputation on the sea.

For in no other section of commerce have the masters been so dominant as in shipping. Shipowners, through a variety of causes, have enjoyed a control over their business which masters in other industries must surely envy. There is the public ignorance and apathy concerning ships and the sea, the old-established wealth of the shipowners, and the special

character of their industry, carried on by small detached companies of voteless labourers scattered over all the world; and that powerful trade union of masters, the Shipping Federation. There should be no wonder, then, that the sailor is a sort of serf still, who can be imprisoned for refusing to work, however good his reasons may be.

Now cotton mills and collieries, long ago, were considered by people who did not work in them, and had the haziest notions of the arts of weaving and mining, as matters which common sense could comprehend, when applied to them. They never were reckoned mystic and taboo. When we came to the conclusion that it was a bad thing to let children of tender years work night and day in the mills, and to crawl about in dark tunnels, with chains about their middles, dragging trucks, we stopped it, in spite of protests. We ordered mill and colliery proprietors to conform to all sorts of restrictive legislation, because human life is at least as valuable as merchandise; and they protested on every occasion that it would ruin them; but they were not ruined. We never doubted we could understand factories and mines and their owners, if we tried. At this point, try to imagine what bright and entertaining elections we should have if Lancashire now began to import Chinamen to run its mills.

But the shipowner has been largely outside the influence of the improving social ethics of the community. We have seen only that the merchant service was the foundation of the commercial supremacy of an island folk, and let it go at that. All the problems of shipping have been regarded as so intricate and profound as to require experts to understand them.

See what happens in consequence in Parliament. For years there had been efforts to include Merchant Jack with those who benefited under the Acts ordering compensation for accidents. Other workers, represented in the House by the delegates of powerful unions, had long enjoyed that benefit. But the argument against it for the sailor was actually that he required it more than the others, because his trade was so dangerous. This was seriously advanced, in the form of an argument showing what a great expense it would be to shipowners. There has long been an agitation, substantially backed, for a light-load line, because it is as dangerous for a vessel to go to sea under-loaded as overloaded. The same thing happens in each case. The report of the Lords' Committee which inquired into this question in 1903 reads like an epic

of tragedy. There is no light-load line yet, and I don't suppose there ever will be. Indeed, the mind of the official politician, in my experience, when applied to matters concerning the life and work of people afloat, is a hopeless enigma. There was, for one bright example of its workings, the Marquess of Salisbury denying any necessity to save life at sea by prohibiting, under some circumstances, the carriage of deck cargoes of timber across the Atlantic in mid-winter. What happens is that the deck-load breaks adrift in heavy weather, and the steamer is damaged structurally, and becomes one of the missing. "But," said the Marquess, "the loss of one steamer a year and twenty-five lives in each case does not appear to me a very large and formidable evil. The question is whether Parliament is called upon to prevent the loss of twenty-five lives. When dealing with so small an evil the question of competition has to be considered." One has to imagine the violent death of twenty-five peers per annum to see the humour of this small evil. And picture also any politician daring to use this argument concerning the workers in any other trade.

At last a Government really did get down to the business of doing something for Merchant Jack. Mr. Lloyd George gave the sailor a better food scale, greater space in his living quarters, and the compensation clauses. We heard much of all this. But we did not hear so much of what the shipowners got in return. It was this. Mr. Lloyd George added a vast sum to the shipowners' capital by Act of Parliament. Overloading was made legal by altering the Plimsoll mark. The men got more provisions, and some of the benefits which all other workers have; and the Government gave to the owners in return vessels of greater cargo capacity. I remember how the Press commented on the humanity of the shipowners, who allowed these reforms to go through with so little opposition and discussion. Yet I myself have witnessed at sea, and have heard other witnesses describe, what happens to a ship when she is loaded with more cargo than she was designed to carry.

There is no doubt a grave danger threatening a maritime nation when the conditions of service in its chief industry—chief, indeed, from every point of view, seeing we cannot feed ourselves—are such that Asiatics are found to be the only people in the world who will submit to quiet and contented service in it (and there is serious doubt now as to the continued content of the Chinamen); and when the masters of that industry take every opportunity of making the native worker in their employ an evil thing to his fellow-countrymen by throwing

beer over him. Once it was thrown over him to help the cause of the German and Scandinavian; now the two last are catching some of that beer, too, in the cause of a lower-grade labour still. Yet I must say there is some cause for the charge of insobriety and unreliability against the white sailor. And there is a reason for it. The kind of man the shipowner gets to work his business, it is evident, would depend upon the kind of reward he offered for the work. Compared with the terms of employment ashore, the shipowner's terms are not good enough. He cannot attract the best men. I know, from my own experience in a shipping parish, where, at one time, it was as likely a boy would be sent to sea for his living as to any other business, that sailoring is no longer looked upon as respectable employment. There once it was considered more than usually honourable labour. Now it is thought to be the only remaining chance for one whose unstable character has failed him at all else; who wants the nonsense knocked out of him. The desire for sea-work, speaking broadly, is a sure mark either of gross inexperience (seeing we live in a shipping parish, and so ought to know something of ships and their owners) or else of incapacity and a low ideal. The young fellow who merely knocks about looking for a ship is not of much account. If a man is forced to sea, through long unemployment ashore, then it is but one more mark of his dire misfortune. The old sailor, careful for his bright lad's welfare there, would as soon think of making an able seaman of him as of apprenticing him to a match-seller.

There you have the present position. On one hand is the shipowner, explaining that his employment of cheap alien labour is because it is more reliable than that offered by his countrymen; and on the other hand is the class, which at one time took some pride in supplying the British shipowner with the rare and right material, with the men whose fine work helped to build up our maritime reputation, looking upon sea-work now as so unremunerative and disagreeable as to mark the man who accepts it as fit for nothing else. The mental horizon of the labouring class has widened. That class is better educated, and is used to better environment and better food than satisfied it thirty years ago. Employers ashore have had to adjust their affairs, compelled by trade unions and legislation, to meet the improved standard of living which labouring folk now entertain. But the ship and her owner have been almost outside that influence, still working in the period before the Factory Acts; still offering a labourer's wage, and circumstances no labourer would accept

if he had any grit and capacity, at one of the most dangerous of trades.

What can schemes for boy sailors do for a problem of that sort? The charitable are only wasting their money in supporting them. If we require the right men to look upon a life before the mast as something as good as other work, we must make it so. It is not so now. That is the only scheme which would be successful.

If we will not pay for the right men, we cannot have them. We must accept the inferior men and the unfortunates; and we do. The grade of labour employed on our ships is at the bottom degree. The continuance of the service depends on those men, as we have recently seen. It would be idle to guess about the probabilities of war-time, with a maritime nation using the commonest kind of alien labour, for "cheapness," in running its merchant ships, while depending upon its food supplies arriving safely and regularly from abroad. But one may entertain a far dim vista in which there seem to be surging hordes of the indignant cadaverous, apparently decorating the lamp-posts of Westminster with legislators and those people who, in the happy days when the only consideration was dividends, were so enamoured of inferior men as sailors; not because inferior men were cheaper, you must understand, but because they were more reliable.

The Music-Hall

By G. H. Mair

The curtain fell; the studded lights on the notice-boards in the wings went out and then grouped themselves into a new number; the desultory ebb of applause which had saluted a parting favourite came swinging back, one climbing tempestuous wave of delight; the conductor raised his baton, the orchestra tore out a familiar quick-time melody; then the curtain rose again. Out on to the narrow strip of stage, between the footlights and the backcloth (the one with the impossible street on it with deep-eaved overhanging houses), came the "star." He walked across the stage and then back to the footlights, a swinging, half-prancing walk that had fixed steps in it like a dance. The very sight of it made you tingle with enjoyment; you savoured in it something ecstatic, exhilarating; the sideways glancing merriment which went with it made you feel as though the spirit of comedy had bodied itself to walk before you on the stage. Then he sang, and indeed the singing was naught, and might have been left out without much loss, for as the "star" has grown great his music has withered, even as his acting grew. Then he stopped singing and began to talk. He had been, so it seemed, to a wedding, and at the entertainment that followed it there had been speeches and some drink. That was all, and it was in itself neither exciting nor new. But to the "star," you felt it was the greatest fun he had ever had in his life—a unique and perfect comic experience that he had to live through again now before you on the instant. He took you into his confidence about it, seemed to be telling the story not to the whole audience, but to each member of it separately, realised the humour of it so fully and completely that articulation all but choked itself in bubbling, perspiring, inexhaustible laughter, and at times you felt you would never get the story at all. Indeed, if it had not been for the lulls which mere mortal exhaustion made in that tempest of merriment, you would never have got it, and the loss would have been irreparable, simply because you must have known that a joke which seemed so good to its maker must be the best joke in

the world, and a tragedy to miss. So it went on, the audience more and more excited and vivacious, the tides of laughter rippling back and fro over it visibly, till the curtain fell again and the lights on the little notice-boards in the wings went out. Then the "star" came through the folds of the curtain, and we shouted to him for more, more songs, old songs, things he had sung these dozen years, and he called back to us in the cheery, quite independent way that a man talks to old friends, and told us he wouldn't. More cheering, reluctantly acquiescent in the refusal; then a trick cyclist, then the cinematograph traced out its flickering comment on the week's events—a race meeting, a procession, a cross-country flight; then we all tumbled out to the glistening lamplight of the Strand.

Compared with any possible evening at a theatre the thing was bewildering. For except at a few favoured places, like the Abbey Theatre (seldom at the other so-called "Repertory" theatres), the English theatre has no artistic vitality whatever. It does not make an appeal direct to the hearts of its audiences; it binds itself to them by no bond of sympathy or mutual interest; it has nothing in common with the basic stuff of humanity, that common multiple of the serried souls of its audiences, to which the theatre if it is to be fresh and living must sedulously address itself. Hence it comes about that at nine out of ten theatres you could visit the audience is bored or listless, it has no kinship in enjoyment either itself among its members or between its members and the players; it goes there not because it likes the play, but because somebody else likes it, or it thinks it ought to like it, or because, if only it can stand it long enough, it will somehow grow to like it. Meanwhile, its members sit there, each a votary at a shrine from which the goddess has departed;

> As you by their faces see
> All silent and all damned

to the performance of a show from which has fled all reality, all illusion, and all joy. So if you want at this present time to see England at the play, you must go not to a theatre, but to a music-hall. If you want to gauge the progress of dramatic artistry in England, you must go to a music-hall. And it is in the music-hall that the best English acting—perhaps the only live English acting—is to be found. The coming command-performance is welcome if tardy evidence that this fact, which must be the merest commonplace to critics and playgoers, has reached our rulers. They have realised, one may conceive,

that in the music-hall lie the springs of most of the dramatic development we can hope for. It is relevant to ask how and why? Let me explain why.

The music-hall is our one pure-blooded native amusement. It has a pedigree that is clear and undoubted, through the tavern, that great agent of social continuity, back to Elizabethan days—to the days when the theatre did really represent and embody the soul of a nation. The tavern stage of the development of the music-hall is within living memory; Colonel Newcome's adventure has fixed it for us in print. But the closeness of the relation between it and the Elizabethan theatre is less observed, and is well worth noting. The superficial resemblances between the Globe or the Curtain and the older and less reputable of our music-halls are obvious. The audience in each case is the same. The middle-class, respectable citizen never crossed to the Bankside; he left that to his adventurous sons. In his place were racing-men, or their equivalents of that day, coney-catchers, and the like, young men of the aristocracy, who sat on the edge of the stage (our front-row stalls) and had personal relations with the players; commonly, the only women present were women of the town. But beneath these outward similarities, there are similarities in grain. For the Elizabethan theatre, for all the midsummer splendours of the plays it has left us, was an affair of the actor. On a rag of a part, the comedian, not scrupling to speak more than was set down for him, embroidered as genius might prompt; he owed little, indeed, directly to eminent authors, and when he was at his greatest, as in Tarleton, and Kemp, and Cowley, he either wrote his own songs, or, if they were written for him by some nameless scribbler, proclaimed them his own, and the music too. The Elizabethan playgoer, along with this interest in the actor which has subsisted vigorously enough in our theatres as well as in our halls, had another which our theatres have lost beyond recovery. He loved the virtuoso; mere skill attracted him. The broadsword combat between Macbeth and Macduff, the rapier duels in a dozen plays, the wrestling between Charles and Orlando, were real tests of skill enjoyed by audiences for their own sake and outside their setting. The bear in the *Winter's Tale*, that made its meal off the old gentleman, was doubtless brought from one of the pits of the Bankside; and we know with what effect, in the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Shakespeare could use the performing dog. So you can trace Hackenschmidt, or the professors of jiu-jitsu, back to Charles, our boxers to the broadsword men—a game of skill

now gone out—and the audience which hangs breathless upon the incomparable miracle of Cinquevalli to the audience which clustered round some simpler wonder on a platform stage. With the more obvious matters of tradition, the character comedians and their patter, investigation could make an even stronger case. One may find in Shakespeare's earlier comedies the very fellow of those wordy altercations between a gentleman and a non-such that are an established mode in our halls. And has not a subtle critic traced Mr. George Robey, forgetting, as I think, a plainer native original, back to the actors of the "Comedy of Art" of the Italian Renaissance, and played with the thought that "some of the sallies that detonate on every week-night in a thousand English music-halls, the old stuff about frumps and termagants and comic tipsiness, may have been going off in Western Europe without a break, except at some festivals of the Church, since some wag first tried them on the Medici at Florence"?

The music-hall, then, has vitality, because it has its continuous history right back into the past, and because it has preserved the salient qualities of its ancestry—its delight in virtuosity, in the pleasure of a thing well done, its sense of an intimate personal relation between audience and actors. But it draws its vitality, not merely from this continuous tradition, but because it has its roots deep in the soil of contemporary life. Art cannot spread its branches wide, nor flower magnificently, if it has not roots that dig down amongst the clay and the worms. And the art of the music-hall bears its flowers and fruit because it draws its nourishment from beneath the shams on the surface of our civilization, from the lasting permanent things. It reports what it has seen, and testifies what it has heard. To gird at its vulgarities and tritenesses, at its endless iteration of what seem outworn conventions, is to miss its essence and its soul. Every platitude was once a paradox; every music-hall joke and convention—the mother-in-law, the sausages, the lodger even—once came bright and shining from the mint of humanity, coined into speech, or song, or pantomime by some excited discoverer, fresh and glowing with the pride of invention. And though circulation may have worn them to the collector who seeks for the imprint of the die, they are still good currency, and bear their face value among the folk to whom they are passed. For to the audiences in the halls, a good part of them, these things are the stuff of life, and they stand for problems infinitely more vital, and interesting, and alive, than the drama can give.

A comedian like Mr. Robey isolates and brightens to the n^{th} power traits that the gallery knows well enough in common clay; as for Mr. Lauder, with his apparatus of lassies, and lilies, and heather, he has the Scotch Lowlander, who loves his sentimentalism "neat" like his whisky, to the life, and there is no one that has lived anywhere between the Forth and the Cheviots who does not recognise it on the instant. Enforcing this rooted sympathy between audience and actors, goes the intimate relation between them in the theatre. I know of no trait in the music-hall so remarkable and worth considering as this. See Mr. Wilkie Bard teaching the audience to sing the chorus of one of his songs; on the one side, the sedulous anxiety of the actor really to get in touch with his public; on the other, a multitude of men and women, every one alert and vivacious, each and all conscious of a close and personal companionship of delight. Watch Mr. Robey at his opposite game, not of encouragement, but of rebuke; first a word or two, and then he detects some misplaced laugh in the audience, "checks, bridles up, and passes in pantomime from tantrum to tantrum, the gusts and squalls of temper coming and going in him visibly." And it is all acting, not merely middling, fitfully good acting as on the regular stage, but acting extraordinarily subtle, and studied, and complex. Europe has not had another comedian as good as Mr. Lauder since Coquelin died. And have not the critics declared that Marie Lloyd is our only English actress?

Just because it has this vitality, this close and intimate bond with its audience, the music-hall is besides being the most individual and characteristic of our entertainments, incomparably the most elastic; so that if you wanted to see how London draws into its throbbing centre all the splendour, and wealth, and beauty in the world, you could not do it better, nor indeed elsewhere half so well, as in one of the great music-halls. All the wonders of the world are there, Indian jugglers, American cowboys, singers from Paris, dancers from St. Petersburg, and Moscow, and Berlin, and the East. Our music-halls have naturalised the ballet long ago, till Genée has been all but an English possession. Now we have made all dancing our province, not only the careful artificiality of the ballet, but the miracle of the Russians who can give us all the ballet gives, and something more, Oriental, perhaps, in its origin, and the new-fangled dancing that dances as a bear does, swaying indisciplinedly and instinctively to any tune that is called. Reinhardt has brought us *Sumurūn*, and there

is promise of more to come. The cinematograph was swept long ago into this all-embracing net. The best actors of the theatres of the world come to it in their best parts. And alongside of all, the native dynasty of the halls lives as it has always lived, holding aloft and in triumph the unchanging immemorial art of the mime and the clown.

There are, I know, pessimists who believe that the heyday of the music-hall is over. A plethora of internationalism, respectability, and syndicated halls has smothered, so they say, the native Anglo-Saxon vulgarity and individualism which was its chiefest glory; and the sketch, the moving pictures, and the dancers but come to give the final blow. They miss in the big modern Empires and Hippodromes, in the Palaces and Palladiums, those traditional turns they loved in their golden youth. Where are now the sisters, the brothers, the cross-talk comedians, the musical families? Where is the mother-in-law, the lodger, the diurnal trials and disillusionments of married life? Where are the snows of yester year? Useless to offer them Pavlova or Mordkin; man delights not them, nor woman neither. As for the pitiful novelties of the Hippodromes, the "missing links," the intelligent gorillas, the accomplished baboons, not for a wilderness of monkeys would they barter one turn of the old song and dance. One of these strait and formal votaries I used sometimes to hear of, who combined with a rare and delicate faculty of execution in another art an amazing and exact knowledge of the archæology of the halls as they were twenty-five or thirty years ago. The music-hall was his hobby, his avocation, the thing at which he shone in all his splendour. To know him you had to see him in his box (none of your stalls for him, for was not the audience as much a spectacle as the stage?), with cane and gloves in the mid-Victorian manner, gravely conducting the refrains of the songs he loved. All the circumstance and tradition of the business he knew, as his betters might know a liturgy or a ritual. He was learned, too, in vestments; could tell you how differently the umbrella of a cynic shaped from that of a sardonic comedian, how sisters differed in dress from those pairs, "Daisy and Evelyn" and the like, who were not sisters, what the just dress and assortment of a family should be, and how a family differed from a troupe. He knew the uprising and setting of all the "stars," when such and such a convention came in or went out, could give you the year in which the American cross-talk ousted the Irish, or when the first Scotch comedian came south and took by storm the town. Nothing was hidden

from him; for aught I can tell he may have known the difference between a "refined comedy vocalist" and a "dainty comedienne." In it all he was an incorrigible *laudator temporis acti;* the family had gone, the bottle-nosed, out-at-elbows comedian was going, and even the comedienne was threatened; in their place had come the sketch, for which he held the proper place was the theatre, and the cinematograph, for which his aversion was peculiar and profound. If you argued with him, and quoted great names, he would answer that they were all middle-aged, and had only a year or two to run. Dan Leno is gone already years ago, and to the present generation of audiences—for they change quickly in bulk—his name is hardly less remote than that of Toole, or, maybe, Garrick. And when the present constellations are set, there will be none to rise in their places and brighten our nights.

This is a question which lovers of music-halls have got to face. Whatever its capacity to capture and absorb every new kind of public delight, the music-hall cannot preserve the full current of its life if it loses that part of itself which gives it its quality of race and its continuity. We cannot have our George Robey and Marie Lloyd and Harry Lauder for ever. When the time comes whom shall we set on vacant thrones? It is a question which every true lover of the music-hall will want to settle for himself, and which the critic must approach with some diffidence, because the accidents of public vogue are uncertain, and genius springs up on a sudden from Scotland or the provinces without any herald to announce its approach. It is not five years ago since Mr. E. V. Lucas, in one of those golden pages of his *Wanderer in London*, which is the truest bit of writing extant about the music-hall, referred to "a Scotch low comedian, Harry Lauder," and prefixed a sentence of quintessential critical insight about him with a doubt as to the wisdom of speaking of what might be only a temporary and fugitive capture of the public taste. To-day Lauder is immortal, the hero of two continents, with scarcely more worlds to conquer. Then he was a new arrival of whom no one knew how soon might be the end. So I say it is dangerous to plump for the opinions of the next decade. Still, there are three names that I cannot help mentioning. All of them have, in a sense, arrived, and each draws his crowds of delighted followers; I believe each is on the programme of the command-performance; but none of them is quite on the top, quite reached the place which the retirement (may it be long distant!) of their elders will ultimately give them. One of them, Mr. Wilkie Bard,

I have mentioned earlier in this article. To me he is simply one of the finest actors on the English stage. The rigid spareness and economy of his method—a thing of suggestions, of hints, and half-spoken confidences, rather than of complete statement—is too high for praise. And Mr. Bard has attuned himself to the new music-hall audience, to middle-class respectability there with its family, without losing one jot of his artistic freedom and range. Another is Miss Clarice Mayne, a young lady who goes further with her art every time she comes to town, and I doubt not will go further yet. See her in her crinoline song; watch the grace and precision of every movement, the delicate fluttering of the parasol that can be as eloquent and final an expression of personality as a fan, and then ask yourself if anything quite like it has been seen on the music-hall stage of our time, whether she has not brought with her something that, besides being rare and fine, is new for our delight. But of the newer players the palm must go to the Lancashire comedian, George Formby. Mr. Formby has explored with extraordinary zest and completeness a new domain—a domain touched by Mr. Lauder in "The Saftest o' the Family," but otherwise unconquered till Mr. Formby came to possess it. The mere foolishness and futility of mortal man, our pitiful incapacities and fumblings—what the Scotch call "fecklessness"—become alive in his hands. With what gusto and sympathy he gets into the soul of the inefficient, the "soft," the rags and windlestraws of humanity, presenting such a one's pathetic diffidences, his anxious self-approval, his consciousness of being in the swim of the world, his meekness under oppression—matrimonial and other—all his trivial importances and interests; and all, not in sentimentalism, but in a spirit of pure comedy—the spirit that made Shallow and Slender, and Aguecheek and Bottom and his crew. Perhaps one ought to add to him Mr. George Mozart, and perhaps, too—but I could go on exploring programmes and memories and savouring a renewal of pleasures for ever. It is time for the next turn.

The Genealogy of Morals

By Horace B. Samuel

I

The Genealogy of Morals: a Polemic! Nietzsche was well-advised to append the word "polemic" to his title, for it supplies the key to his whole position. To some extent, no doubt, the "Genealogy" may be the expression in more philosophic language of those ideas, which find in Zarathustra their poetic and almost Biblical formulation. Yet philosopher though he may be, Nietzsche is no abstract thinker sitting down stolidly on some icy height to solve the riddle of the universe, whatever it may be, by the rigid rules of abstract logic, so that he may placidly present the solution to such members of the public as happen to be interested in metaphysics. On the contrary his mind, and even more truly his temperament, are made up from the outset. Certain ideas grip him so tensely, and for him, at any rate, constitute so fiery and omnipresent a reality, as to be from his standpoint things transcending the mere cavillings of logicians and scientists.

"You ask me why," said Zarathustra, "but I say unto you I am not one of those whom one may ask their why."

The same idea is more technically expressed in the preface to the Genealogy—"that new immoral, or, at least, 'amoral' *a priori*, and that 'categorical imperative,' which was its voice (but, oh! how hostile to the Kantian article, and how pregnant with problems) to which since then I have given more and more obedience (and, indeed, what is more than obedience)." For, startling though it may seem to the orthodox, albeit acceptable enough to the acolytes of the new faith, the fact stands out irresistibly, that all the later writings of Nietzsche are saturated through and through with the religious spirit.

For Nietzsche was inspired with as supreme a consciousness of the infallibility and paramount necessity of his message, as rigid a belief in exclusive salvation through his own teachings, as has ever overwhelmed the brain of any prophet or Messiah

known to human history. "I have given mankind the deepest book it possesses," writes Nietzsche to Brandes, and means it quite deliberately and quite literally. The content, indeed, of the religion of this converse Christ may be diametrically opposed to that of the original, but the machinery is the same. With the same exalted spirit in which Jesus preached the kingdom of heaven, so did Nietzsche preach the kingdom of this earth, while it may be noted incidentally that both kingdoms were the perquisites of a select few; and as the spurned god of Israel taught self-abasement to the weak with an intensity that, rightly or wrongly, seems a little extravagant to our modern taste, so does Nietzsche, and with every whit as honest a fanaticism, thunder forth to the strong the sublime dogma of self-expression and self-glorification. Turn, in fact, the doctrines of Christianity upside-down, but leave constant the missionary enthusiasm of its founder, his chronic fits of extreme depression and extreme exaltation, and you have the quintessence of Nietzsche.

As, however, it is the boast of all religions that they are beyond the realms of exact logic and empirical science, it would be as unfair to look in our prophet's polemic for the mathematical accuracy of a Euclidian proposition, as it would be to search for such accuracy amid the many grandiose and tragic thoughts that loom over the invectives of Jesus, Isaiah, and Jeremiah.

Not, indeed, but what there are many new, swift, and illuminating truths in our philosopher's gospel, just as there were in the pronouncements of his aforesaid Hebrew brethren. But the essence, the *raison d'être* of the whole book is purely polemical. Nietzsche is out to kill, and so long as his weapons effectually subserve that object, he is, and quite logically, indifferent to aught else.

Before, however, we analyse in detail the philosophy of this book, it is advisable to adjust our sights to those particular targets on which Nietzsche trained his gigantic and murderous artillery. We shall also have a better prospect of getting really into touch with "the very inner pulse of the machine," the real core of this philosophy, if we take a necessarily short, but it is to be hoped none the less vivid, glance at those reasons which induced Nietzsche to envisage the objects of his attack with so tense and implacable a hatred.

Now Nietzsche found his intellectual jumping-off ground in that hybrid of Christianity and Buddhism stuck on a pedestal of sex, which constituted the philosophy of

Schopenhauer and the essence of the fashionable pessimism of mid-century Germany. To endeavour to condense one of the most brilliant and elaborate systems of the last century into a few words is at best a delicate and hazardous task, yet perhaps we may adumbrate tentatively the radical elements which spurred Nietzsche to so sanguinary a revolt.

Life according to Schopenhauer was a sorry failure, a thing not worth living on its merits, but kept going by the driving impetus of a blind life-force and knit with a mutual pity. Life then being intrinsically evil, the remedy for the evil was to live as little as possible—"Draw your desire back from the world so that there may be an end of that phenomenal life which is nothing but grief." Apart from general asceticism, there were two specific anodynes prescribed by Schopenhauer for the disease called life—art which transcended life, and lifted the spectator or listener on to another plane, and philosophy which, as it were, blunted the sting of life by the contemplation of the essentially unreal nature of the phenomenal universe. But the greatest good was Nirvana, a kind of Pantheistic Absolute of negativity, into which one eventually merged, to enjoy the supreme paradox of a peaceful self-consciousness of one's own nothingness.

It is easy for us to sneer, nowadays, at this bilious and suicidal system, and to explain the whole theory of the will to Live by the keen and chronic tyranny which the sexual instinct exercised over the philosopher himself; the fact remained, Schopenhauer was the dominant influence of the day—how dominant, can be seen from the fact that the whole of later Wagnerian music is merely a translation of his philosophy into the language of sound. It is easy to see the extent to which Schopenhauer and Wagner were saturated with the whole spirit of primitive and mediæval Christianity. Human life, forsooth, is essentially bad and essentially unreal; salvation only lies in the mortification and annihilation of the self. Apart, however, from philosophical and theological technicalities, the profound psychological import of this nihilistic pessimism and neo-Christian romanticism is patent. Man looks at man's life on earth, and gives it up as a bad job, or at best makes some fantastic effort to create a new world to redress the balance of the old. "They wanted to run away from their misery, and the stars were too far away. Then they sighed, 'Oh, that there were heavenly ways, forsooth, to slink into another Being and Happiness.'"

It has, in fact, been well put that, as the motto of Goethe was "Memento vivere," so was the motto of Schopenhauer "Memento mori."

Now, Nietzsche voiced the revolt of those temperaments whose ears were attuned rather to "Memento vivere" than "Memento mori." We must remember, moreover, that that Christian romanticism which finds its best metaphysical formulation in Schopenhauer was in itself but a reaction from the real spirit of the century, that ebullience and exuberance of the human ego of which Stendhal is perhaps the most typical manifestation; if space permitted it would be instructive to trace the intellectual descent of Nietzsche from Stendhal, and, applying again the sociological method, to speculate as to how far he derived some of the impetus for his philosophy of egoism from the aggressive wars of Prussia, as exemplified in the Sadowa campaign and the Franco-German War. It is time, however, that we came to the temperament of the philosopher himself. It is indeed a platitude, that as man makes his gods in his own image, so does the philosopher create his systems. What is Aristotle's ideal of the Βίος Θεωρήτικος and his conception of the self-contemplative god, but the erection into a universal norm of the thinker's natural philosophic idiosyncrasy? What is the elaborate "I and Me" of the cosmology of Fichte, but the attribution to the universe of the personal idiosyncrasies of Fichte, the self-conscious Doppelgänger? And how Schopenhauer promoted sex into the devil, whose heat animates this earthly hell, we have already seen. What, then, was the impetus which impelled Nietzsche to batter down the walls of the contemporary moral and philosophic universe? The theory of an innate *joie de vivre*, a system highly, if not over-charged with vitality, supplies but half the answer. The real explanation lies in the stiffening of this natural exuberance beneath the tension of a grim incessant struggle with a nervous malady.

It is not, indeed, necessary to go as far as the Swedish writer, M. Bjerre, who finds in Nietzsche's deliberate and revolutionary transvaluation of values that break-up of the cerebral system from its previous condition which signalises the earlier stages of general paralysis. Yet Nietzsche's own writings, particularly his letters, reveal how potent was the stimulus exercised on his ego by those nervous headaches which hounded him over the continent. To prevent defeat his will had to be perpetually strained to the maximum pitch

of tension. The sweets of comfort being denied him, the only alternative left was to find a kind of super-happiness in the ecstasies and exultations of that Titanic contest which was perpetually fought on the battlefield of his own person. Let him speak for himself. "I made of my wish to get well, to live, my philosophy—it should, in fact, be noted—the years when my vitality descended to its minimum were those when I ceased to be a pessimist."

We have not, however, at this juncture space further to elaborate the theory of the superman. Let it be enough to say that it is the raising to the n^{th} power of the spirit of struggling and aggressive efficiency, and the venting of an over-full vitality by the creation of new values out of the wealth of the individual ego. As, however, the glorification of strength involves, and logically so, the degradation of weakness, and "to build up a sanctuary it is necessary for a sanctuary to be destroyed," it is not surprising that Nietzsche should clear the ground for his new creations by a ferocious bombardment of the crumbling ruins that still encumbered the site. Schopenhauer, who had been the fount from which Nietzsche's philosophic youth had drawn its inspiration before, as it were, he had found him out, is always treated with a certain amount of respect. But the arch-enemy was the, to him, poisonous system of altruism, self-annihilation, and world-renouncement which was called Christianity.

The cynical may smile at the inordinate and concentrated frenzy of this attack. "Is not your wildly militant prophet simply wasting his powder and shot? Who in his senses ever heard of Christianity being taken *au pied de la lettre*, even by the most orthodox of modern bishops? What is it, to use another metaphor, but flogging a dead horse?" To which Nietzsche's answer would be that it is by removing the foundations that you remove also the superstructure, or to translate our metaphor, "Let me kill Christianity, and I kill at the same time all the system of altruism for altruism's sake, of abstract truth for the sake of abstract truth, which is built on that hateful foundation." It may also be observed that, even apart from the poetic and prophetic licence to which a man writing under such circumstances would be legitimately entitled, there are even now not wanting people who do in point of fact take Christianity with all the implicit seriousness of the mediæval monks or the early Fathers. It is, indeed, a phenomenon not without a certain intrinsic humour, that

almost at the very moment when Tolstoi is making his pathetic efforts to resuscitate literal Christianity with the abortive tears of pity, Nietzsche should swing along to flagellate the semi-inanimate ghost, in no monkish spirit, forsooth, but with all the grim and scientific energy of the most enthusiastic of executioners, compared to whom Voltaire was but the most urbane of wits, and Heine the most innocuous of schoolboys. Having thus taken a brief view of the targets, and of the implacable and very serious spirit that animates the assailant, let us glance briefly at the chief lines of attack.

II

The first essay of the Genealogy consists of an essay on "Good and Evil, Good and Bad." The line of attack is double, being first etymological, and secondly historical.

Without going into philological exactitudes, it is, we think, fairly safe to follow Nietzsche in his theory that the word "good" and its analogues were originally applied to designate those qualities which were peculiar to the governing aristocratic classes, albeit qualities by no means susceptible of the title of "ethical" goodness. Physical valour being in primitive times the most valuable asset of the community, it is not unnatural that that quality should be held in universal esteem. We would remark, however, in passing, that though Nietzsche professes to make a flying expedition into the domain of early Greek ethics, which would appear, according to his teachings, to be represented as an ideal system worthy of modern imitation, he is apparently oblivious to the fact that the spirit of cunning prudence, of which he so emphatically disapproves, was one of the most admired qualities of primitive Greece.

On the general question, however, we may perhaps supplement Nietzsche's by Spencer's argument on the meaning of the English word "good," which, as is notorious, has the double meaning of "ethical" and "efficient." Instructive, however, though this argument is, it cannot be said to clinch the question, since, even in the times of ancient Greece, there were not wanting words such as καλός, αἰσχρὸς, ὅσιος to denote, albeit mostly in æsthetic terminology, that ethical meaning, of which the word ἀγαθος fell so signally short. In other words, to use Nietzschean terminology, the ethical taint even then existed, though in a less virulent form.

The other line of attack, however, is more serious, and penetrates to the very core of the modern moral system with its savage onslaught on Christianity. What is Christianity, says Nietzsche, but the revolt of the slaves in the sphere of morals? Our philosopher's suggestion, of course, that Christianity was a deliberate stratagem on the part of a revengeful Israel to square accounts with the conqueror, has, on the face of it, no claim to serious consideration as anything but a poetic thought. The fact, however, that Christianity from its beginning catered avowedly for the poor, the weak, the oppressed, the inefficient, is admittedly true, whatever disputes may rage as to the inferences to be drawn from this fact. And that the accusation of being a slave-morality is something more than empty abuse, is substantiated by the numerous slaves who did, in fact, subscribe to the infant creed. It is, moreover, not without its interest to watch nowadays a recurrence of the same phenomenon. Just, indeed, as at present the proletariate are *ipso facto* ready to believe, quite apart from any question of any economic justification of the doctrine, in the genuine iniquity of the rich capitalist, so in the early Christian era the proletariate were not reluctant to put their faith in the saying that "it was as easy for a camel to go through the eye of a needle as for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven." The difference, however, between modern and ancient Christianity stands out clearly from the fact that though this identical creed is now invoked with something approaching equal facility on the sides both of the angels and the devils, it is, on the whole, identified with the richer and more prosperous classes.

It must, however, be frankly admitted that Nietzsche somewhat overshoots the mark, both in dubbing the history of the world a conflict between the two ideals of Rome and Judea, the egoistic and altruistic ideals, and in asseverating that the primitive "beast of prey prowling avidly after booty and victory" was the only type of the human species worthy of admiration, and that the tamed modern species is but a diseased distortion. We will deal later with the lacuna caused in Nietzsche's philosophy by his refusal to recognise the true significance of the Aristotelian doctrine that man is a ζῶον πολίτικον, when we show that even from his own standpoint the modern state of man is preferable to the primal. Suffice it for the present to say that, however large a part of the truth Nietzsche captured with this potent theory, there remains a not inconsiderable part which still eluded him.

III

Having endeavoured thus to dispose of the "ethically good" and "ethically bad" by the theory that such ideas are merely distortions of the ideas of "practically good and practically bad," Nietzsche in the second essay of the Genealogy makes a similar effort to take the sting out of the ideas of "Schuld" (guilt, debt) and "schlechtes Gewissen" (bad conscience). But here, again, difficulties beset our revolutionary. He approves of responsibility and the sacredness of the promise, but disapproves of the bad conscience by which the individual would enforce these things on himself. He blesses justice, but damns the social system. We shall find it hard to follow him in his attempted reconciliation of these divergent standpoints. When, for instance, he alludes with almost paternal approbation to the savage mnemonics by which the "conscience" (*per se*) was produced, and then proceeds to an envenomed, if none the less brilliant polemic against the "bad conscience," we see that in reality it is not so much the existence of a conscience, *quâ* conscience, to which he objects, but the existence of a conscience functioning on what he conceives to be a vicious basis. Indeed, even the most faithful of our prophet's disciples would admit that the Nietzschean teaching lays down as thorny and toilsome a path for the "bold, bad" man, or *übermensch*, as Christianity ever decreed for the good man or weakling. The only difference, in fact, between Nietzschean and Christian ethics is that between excessive self-affirmation and excessive self-negation. But one only has to read Zarathustra to realise immediately that this self-affirmation is no heedless hedonism, but a tense and chronic struggle of the ego against the world, subject to as rigid rules and braving as intense martyrdoms as does the Christian struggle of the spirit against the flesh. We may say, in fact, that on an officially Nietzschean basis the "bad" man who fails in being thoroughly and perfectly bad is, and apparently properly so, subject to as poignant pangs as is the "good" man who fails in being thoroughly and perfectly good.

Granted, however, that it is the content of the bad conscience, rather than the existence of a bad conscience *per se*, which provokes his righteous indignation, let us make some attempt to see how far Nietzsche is logical in condemning, as he does, existing ethics as the bastard child of contract and revenge, thriving amid a civilization which has no real right to exist. Nietzsche starts off in fine feather to prove that

the word "Schuld" (guilt) is the same as the word "Schuld" (debt), as though that momentous piece of philological research crushed all ethics once and for all. We do not for a moment dispute the philology. Moreover, as far as the general principle is concerned, it had been previously pointed out by Maine that all crimes were in their origin torts—that is to say, private wrongs against the individual (though doubts, as to how far this theory is to be carried, are raised by the universal execration which even in the most primitive societies was visited on murderers like Cain or Orestes).

It may, moreover, be true that in many cases the local god is simply a deceased ancestor promoted to a heavenly status, who requires payment for protecting his descendants. But such arguments can at the best merely have effect on the theological conception of morality as a divine ordinance descending immediately from heaven. From the sociological standpoint, indeed, to derive "ethics" from "contract" is simply to consolidate one phase of the social instinct by deriving it from another. As, however, has been hinted before, it was the theological conception that was Nietzsche's main objectif. So long as he could kill that, he was indifferent to the price, if, indeed, his morbidly classic and aristocratic standpoint did not hold that the taint of the bourgeois and the βάναυσος attached automatically to everything commercial.

The shifts, however, to which Nietzsche is driven are well illustrated when we come to that further stage in his evolution of the moral idea, which consists in deriving modern ethics or the "bad conscience" from the principle of "resentment" or "revenge," which is alleged to be a totally distinct thing from "the active feeling" by which Justice enforces its sanctions. But with all due respect to Nietzsche and his official expounders, we find it hard to appreciate any real difference in principle between the various drastic measures by which the social organism enforces its decree. The punishment for murder, we suggest, would be equally death both in a Nietzschean and in a non-Nietzschean state, and how anything more than the merest verbal distinction is achieved by labelling one sanction the "active emotion of justice," and the other "the principle of resentment" we are frankly at a loss to conceive. We can only say that the basing of the "bad conscience" on the spirit of revenge is true in the sense that from one aspect the function of the social organism is to protect the many against the few by the enforcements of drastic punishments against its transgressors. That, moreover, the strong are unduly

restricted to pamper the weak is an arguable proposition—how arguable, can be seen from the present volubility of the financially strong when menaced nowadays with curtailment for the benefit of the financially weak. But to go to the length of saying that the whole social fabric is a morbid distortion, a thing intrinsically bad, a kind of quasi-theological fall from an ideal state of primitive anarchy, is, at the most charitable estimate, a mere piece of poetic extravagance. Yet to this length Nietzsche goes when he pictures his blonde primæval beast swung into " new situations and conditions of existence " ; in other words, into the " pale of society " " with a spring and rush." The apparent suddenness of the transition strikes us, indeed, as naïf as the philosophy of Rousseau or of Hobbes, who actually conceived the social contract as a specific bargain entered into at a specific time.

One of the most interesting parts, however, of the whole essay is Nietzsche's explanation of the " bad conscience " as the result of the primitive energy of the savage venting itself in psychological self-torture when debarred from its natural outlet of physical violence. " All instincts which do not vent themselves without vent themselves within," so runs the dictum of the prophet, a dictum no doubt of some psychological truth and capable of concrete illustration when applied to nuns, monks, and other ascetics, or to definite cases of neurotic introspection, but clearly not deserving to be treated as the key to the whole social fabric.

We have already remarked that the real weakness of the Nietzschean philosophy lay in the neglect of the Aristotelian theory that man was a *ζῶον πολίτικον*, or a social animal. Let us resume this line of inquiry. Nietzsche does, it is true, refer to the " herd instinct " of the weak, but only to exhibit his very palpable contempt against the weak who herd together so as to be able effectually to combat the strong. A yet further proof of Nietzsche's bitter hatred of the social organism is supplied by the celebrated phrases in Zarathustra, " as little state as possible," and " the slow suicide which we call the state." In our view, however, the real test of Nietzsche's position is touched when we come to the position of the aristocratic strong man. " Are they," one wonders, " tainted or untainted with the herd-instinct ? " Nietzsche's answer to this question seems to be that, so far as concerns the vast bulk of the herd, they are inimical to the social instinct, but that none the less they find social organization (apparently that identical state which we have seen spoken of as " slow suicide ")

necessary, not only for keeping the herd in proper order, but for the purpose of "their own fight with other complexes of power." Viewed impartially, however, it does not seem to us that Nietzsche pays sufficient importance to the universality and value of the social instinct. Perhaps the root of the whole matter lies in the fact that Nietzsche fixes apparently the human unit as the individual, whereas, in point of fact, it is that state in miniature, the family. The origin of the family may no doubt be found in the primeval instincts of sex and parentship. None the less, it is an indisputed sociological fact that the family, or its larger manifestation the tribe, is, as is evident from the slightest perusal of the works of Darwin, Maine, or Westermarck, the primitive form of human life. It would obviously be outside the scope of this preface to go in detail into the whole question of the origin of society, but it would also appear an indisputable platitude that man, *quâ* man, thrives by co-operation and association. In economical terminology this truth is known as the division of labour, in sociology by our frequently quoted Aristotelian dictum that man is a social animal. Nietzsche, it is true, tries to evade, or at any rate minimise, the force of this fact by treating law as the concrete exemplification of might is right. This, of course, is true as far as it goes, but is only one side of the medal. All law is based on sovereignty, and all sovereignty is in the last resort based on force. It is possible, no doubt, for this force, this ultimate sanction, to be exercised on approved Nietzschean principles by the few against the many. To quote the words of Ihering, the great Austrian jurist: "And so force, when it allies itself with insight and self-control, produces law. It is the origin of law out of the power of the stronger who stands in opposition to another, of which we now begin to get a glimpse." Yet, even though for the moment we confine ourselves to this aspect, it is obvious that while such a law subjugates the weak to the strong, it also regulates and curtails the rights of the strong among themselves, creating, as it were, a state within a state, or, to use once again the language of Ihering, "the self-limitation of force in its own interest." Equally important, however, is the obverse side of the medal, on which appears the exercise of the ultimate sanction by the many against the few. To quote Ihering for the last time: "The crucial point in the whole organization of law is the preponderance of the common interests of all over the particular interests of the individuals." The vice, then, of Nietzsche's theory is that he bisects law into its two constituent phases, ignores one phase and confines himself

to the other, apparently in blissful oblivion of the fact that even in the most aristocratic of aristocracies there exists, even though in miniature, the " slow suicide of the state."

There is a further criticism which seems to arise properly out of Nietzsche's vehement denunciation of civilization. The state and civilization are bad according to Nietzsche, because they take the sting out of this struggle for existence, and cut the fangs of the superman. But, according to Nietzschean principles, are they not equally good in so far as they enable the superman to refine and elaborate his scale of combat ? It is, indeed, obvious that the intellectualization of the blonde beast of primitive times into the yellow journal proprietor, American financier, or revolutionary philosopher of modernity would have been impossible but for the intervention of a very highly developed social organism. Yet even the most confirmed Nietzschean would admit that Mr. Rockefeller is, in spite of his evangelistic proclivities, a more highly developed specimen of the superman than Tamerlane, and Mr. Hearst than, say, Cæsar Borgia.

One final observation : according to Nietzsche the test of merit is efficiency and the test of efficiency is success. Supposing, however, that a large number of individuals comparatively weak overpower through sheer force of combination a small number of individuals comparatively strong. Are not the weak changed into the strong, and conversely ? We do not say that this is necessarily so : we merely adduce the argument to show how easily Nietzschean principles lend themselves to exploitation at the hands of the Socialists.

Nietzsche's philosophy, however, was above all didactic, missionary. He analysed contemporary morality, not by way of an academic or scientific exercise, but with a view to striking, and striking hard, at that aspect of it which he quite honestly believed to be vicious and deleterious. Hence it is that having in his first two essays dealt with the etymological and legal aspects of the question, he now goes straight to the root of the whole matter. What is the practical application of all these tendencies which he has analysed ? The ascetic ideal—and against this ideal our teacher proceeds to deliver as tense and concentrated a sermon as ever fell from the lips of any denouncer of the luxurious or non-ascetic ideal. We have not space, unfortunately, to follow Nietzsche through his elaborate analysis both of the ascetic ideal in its origin and in its eventual distortion and corruption at the hands of the ascetic priest. We will only observe that to grasp properly Nietzsche's position,

stress should be laid on the fact that in the same way in which it was not a conscience *per se*, but the content of the popular conscience, so it was not asceticism *per se*, but the current content of asceticism to which Nietzsche objected.

As he explains in drastic and elaborate style, the philosopher, like the jockey or the athlete, would, through the simple exigencies of his *métier*, live the ascetic life. In such cases asceticism is simply the mechanical condition precedent of complete concentration. Similarly, the *übermensch* would no doubt be compelled to live the ascetic life in his strenuous struggle with subsisting values. The asceticism, however, to which Nietzsche in fact did object, was the asceticism which was not like the philosopher's asceticism, a means to creating or promoting actual human life, but was a means to destroying and minimising actual human life, the asceticism which denied the right to happiness, and which found in sin the solution to the riddle of the human world.

Indeed, it is thoroughly characteristic of Nietzsche's whole attitude that he demurs vigorously to almost any solution of the riddle of the world. According to his reasoning the need for any solution at all, whether transcendental, after the pattern of Kant and the Idealists, or quasi-transcendental, after the pattern of the pseudo-metaphysics of the scientists, argues an inability to take life on its own merits and on its own valuation.

Let us finally glance briefly at the practical application of the Nietzschean philosophy, a course thoroughly consistent with the intensely practical spirit of our prophet. We are at first almost overwhelmed by the heterogeneous character of those who profess to be the true disciples of the great master, a character so heterogeneous, forsooth, that Nietzsche seems occasionally to be nothing but a catchword mouthed by every conceivable school of thought with the rankest impunity. The Socialists, conveniently forgetting their opprobrious designation by the sage as " spiders," and the apostolic " Man is not equal," which he had thundered forth, find a bond of sympathy in their common disapproval of Christianity, though even here their standpoints are radically different, since while the " tarantulæ " rebelled against it as being too narrow a prison, Nietzsche scorns it as being too comfortable a lounge. Zarathustra, moreover, showed himself truly Persian in his repudiation of the claims of the child-bearing machine called woman to equal rights with the warrior man : " When thou goest with women," quoth the prophet, " forget not the whip." Nothing daunted, however, the shrieking hordes of the ultra-modern sisterhood,

from the "Free Lover" to the "Ethical Lifer," find in Nietzsche the most emphatic justification for alike their theories and their practices. Does not *Es Lebe das Leben*, the well-known drama of Sudermann, portray the philosophical dogma of self-expression leading to highly unphilosophic applications? Does not the Scandinavian writer and woman with a mission, Ella Key, start her book *Personality and Beauty* with the following quotations from Nietzsche: "Follow after thyself—what says thy conscience?—thou shalt be that which thou art—let the highest self-expression be thy highest expression." Truly the Nietzschean aphorisms seem caps guaranteed to fit the most diverse heads so but they show the slightest disposition to tumidity. Young men and nations in a hurry, Socialists and aristocrats, æsthetes and "woman's righters," all combine in a cacophonous chorus well calculated to make the shade of Zarathustra, should he visit Europe, hasten back in disgust to the mountain peaks of his solitude.

Yet, however susceptible to abuse the Nietzschean philosophy may be, such a multifarious exploitation, though repudiated from the official standpoint, does not strike us as necessarily illogical. The doctrine of the superman, indeed, has in Nietzsche two distinct meanings—the evolution of generic man to his extreme limit, as exemplified in the aphorism, "Man is a bridge between beast and superman," and secondly, the idealization of the clash between the individual and society, the apotheosis of the aggressive combatant element in man, the το θυμοειδες of the Platonic trinity. Yet, whatever meaning may be chosen, it is well-nigh impossible to prevent individuals from cherishing the honest and sincere belief that in developing themselves (whether with or without the rigid discipline incumbent upon the orthodox superman), they are either helping the development of the race, or providing a picturesque expression of a considerably altered, but still authentic, "Athanasius contra mundum." With the present boom no doubt Nietzscheanism may become a craze (in Germany, of course, it is already *passé* and has become academic and respectable), like the æstheticism of the Wilde period, and grow liable to equal if dissimilar perversions.

Yet none the less, if taken very broadly and very sanely, Nietzsche is capable of constituting a valuable modern bible for the twentieth-century man who proposes to live vastly and to play for grand stakes. It may, no doubt, be true that while Heine and Voltaire merely shot poisoned arrows at Christianity, Nietzsche blew it clean away with the giant salvos of his

artillery; yet on the tremendous space that he cleared he built a temple to Energy and Efficiency. And note, that he worships these deities not for any ulterior advantage, but for their own sake solely. His frenzy for life precludes him at once from being a pessimist; it does not follow, however, that he is an optimist (in the hedonistic sense of the word), for neither in his own life, nor in his conception of that of others, do we find it clearly expressed that the pleasures of life outweigh the pains. More accurate is it to say that his is a philosophy transcending optimism. "On! On!! On!!! Live! Live!! Live!!! whatever the result and whatever your fate! Fight life and chance everything, for the fight's the thing rather than the mere trumpery guerdon." So we would venture to phrase the true Nietzschean spirit, or if an actual quotation is required: "I say unto you it is not the good cause which sanctifies the war, but the good war which sanctifies the cause."

The most marvellous thing, however, about this grim lust of life is that it is absolutely insatiate, absolutely infinite. According to the theory of the Eternal Return, the events of this life will repeat and repeat with the tireless inevitability of a recurring decimal. Taken literally, no doubt this theory is simply the mystical dance of a Titanic mind striving to scale infinity. But the psychological significance is none the less profound. Is it not turning the tables with a vengeance on the Christian idea of a prospective non-earthly existence, compared with which this existence is a mere shadowy preparation; to pile future life on future life on future life, and every one of them a repetition of man's life on earth? It is impossible for the affirmation of human existence to be carried further. And this human existence, what is its solution? None, or rather itself! Existence is its own sanction, its own *raison d'être*, and he who coldly ravishes the sphinx of life has found a solution far excelling that of any Œdipus.

The Problem of Unemployment*

By Sir Alfred Mond, Bart., M.P.

THE section over which I have the honour to preside is one of the most important of all the sections of this conference. The subject it deals with is one of the most fundamental and also one of the most difficult of all the social problems presented for our solution. The problem of the unemployed—I prefer to call it that of want of work—is not at all a new problem in the world. It sometimes appears to be assumed that it arises merely from our industrial conditions. That, I think, is a misconception. The industrial conditions which exist to-day have certainly intensified the problem and made it more evident, but want of work can exist in an agricultural community, and in one in which there is no such thing as what we know as an employer. In a country like India, for instance, you have at times millions of people who have no work and who are on the verge of starvation. Yet these millions of people are to a large extent peasants on their own holdings; they have no employer and no employment, in our sense of the word, and yet these people are, truly speaking, quite as much unemployed as men in a shipbuilding yard when there is a lack of orders. The problem, therefore, is not entirely, not even mainly perhaps, a problem of an industrial State. Yet in Great Britain our conditions have changed to such an extent in the last century, we have become so largely an industrial community, that when we are dealing with unemployment we have to devote the greater part of our attention to what I may call industrial unemployment.

CATEGORIES OF UNEMPLOYED

Now there are three or four main ideas and lines into which we can divide our subject. The first is the division of the categories of people who are classed in a loose and unscientific manner as unemployed. It is very often this looseness and

* Presidential Address delivered at the Unemployment Section of the National Conference on the Prevention of Destitution at Caxton Hall, Westminster, on the 30th May, 1911.

want of classification of the unemployed which leads to objections to remedies and to the proposal of false remedies for the solution of our problem. I would like, for the purposes of my address, broadly to divide the unemployed into the following categories. The first are those who want work, who are capable of working in their respective industries, but who cannot obtain work owing to the general demand for goods being less than the supply. The second are those who want work, but who are incapable, or only partially capable, of working, owing either to a lack of demand for the particular work which they are able to do, or to some physical, moral or mental deficiency which prevents them from being fully effective workers. Thirdly, you have those who do not want regular employment. Many of this class are not inefficient in the sense that they are not capable workmen, or that they are morally, mentally or physically deficient; in fact, many of them are very good workmen, sometimes among the best and cleverest; but they belong to a class to whom regular employment for any length of time in one place is constitutionally unpleasant. Sometimes I fancy this class must represent a reversion to the nomadic epoch of the human race. When they have been in any place for a certain length of time the wandering spirit seizes them, and, although they have no complaint to make of their condition, they want to go out and look for pastures new. Then, finally, you have the remainder—those who may be termed unemployable. Of course, these may be unemployable for several reasons. They may be unemployable from physical incapacity, or from defect of character, such as addiction to drink, dishonesty, or slackness, which makes them undesirable and inefficient workers. They may be unemployable because they belong to the category of the work-shy, who never will work when they can find any other method of obtaining a living.

Inadequate Data

Having divided up the subject into these headings, we are immediately brought face to face with a very considerable difficulty—namely, that we have really no information as to what proportion of the so-called unemployed population of the country falls under these various categories. I am going a little later to speak on the subject of statistics, and will then deal somewhat more fully with the point. But one of our great difficulties is that we have no kind of real knowledge, except within very wide limits, as to what are the

real sub-divisions of the entirely different classes of people suffering the same consequences from entirely different causes. Then we have practically no statistical basis for ascertaining the length of time individual workmen are unemployed. Obviously, that is a matter of the very greatest importance. If members of trade unions, or, indeed, every workman in England, had no work for a week during the year, that would not be more than the amount of rest which our industrial conditions require, and which would enable a man to remain an efficient workman. If we knew those who were regularly out of work for only a relatively short time—a time during which they could manage to maintain themselves and their families without hardship—the problem would be more one of encouraging a holiday by means of either private or public assistance than a question of finding work for them.

Annual Week's Holiday

A firm with which I am connected, Brunner, Mond & Co., introduced as far back as 1884 a scheme of holidays for their workmen, and we find the efficiency of the men and their health so much improved thereby, that I am sure not only the men, but also the employers, very largely benefited by the grant of what might appear at first sight rather a sentimental piece of philanthropy. At first a week's holiday on full pay was granted to all men who had not been absent without leave for more than ten days in the preceding year. Latterly such men have been given double pay for this week's holiday; 97.6 per cent. of all the workers have qualified in 1908 as contrasted with 43 per cent. in 1884. The intensity of modern factory work is, of course, enormous compared with that of the past generation. Continuous employment in many industries in which people work year in and year out, without Sundays or time off, owing to continuous processes, is a condition which, to my mind, is almost inhuman. In the old days, when everything was done in a more leisurely way, when the stage-coach was still on the road, and nobody was in much of a hurry, the village blacksmith and the village bootmaker when he had nothing to do for two or three days in the summer did not consider himself very hardly treated as a person lacking employment. He went forth with his family and enjoyed the summer air and the summer scenery. That, of course, the modern factory worker can no longer do, and neither can the modern employer, unfortunately, to a large extent. We are apt to overlook this intensity of work, both as a cause of

breakdown of the workman and also as a reason why we should regard the merely temporary unemployment for a short period as not necessarily a great social evil. But when it becomes, as it is apt to become, and in many cases is, chronic, when people are unemployed for long periods, and cannot find work in their own trades or even in any trade for weeks and months, the effect is not only great hardship to the man and his family, but a social evil and an economic loss of great magnitude.

Every trained workman represents a valuable asset to the community. A considerable amount of money has been spent in teaching him; he has passed through an apprenticeship to his trade, and by that fact he has become much more valuable than an untrained man. He is an economic factor of value, like a doctor or lawyer or anyone who has received a more expensive education. But if you allow that man to become, through unemployment, incapable of the work for which he has been trained, if you reduce him to a lower standard of labour in the labour market, or if you reduce him, as some are finally reduced, to a condition when he no longer can do any efficient work, you are causing a great economic loss to the community—an economic loss which, I think, has never yet been quite realised. We have dealt with this question not too much perhaps, but very largely from what I might call the sentimental side rather than from the economic side, and if to-day I am rather more economic, I think it is only right in a section like this that we should endeavour to avoid what may be called the purely humanitarian aspect of the problem, and, as far as possible, try to bring it within the purview of economy and social science.

Lack of Statistics

I just mentioned the difficulty we are in owing to the lack of reliable statistics. We have no statistics in this country, I regret to say—I am afraid there are no statistics in any country—which really give us either the magnitude of the problem we have to deal with, or a logical separation of the classes with which we are concerned. You frequently see quoted the so-called Statistics of Unemployment which are published by the Board of Trade in the *Labour Gazette*—figures relating to unemployment; you see the most remarkable deductions drawn from these figures by social reformers, party politicians, and newspaper writers. Yet anyone who has ever gone into these figures with a little care will note that all the trade unions represented in the

returns number only 764,000 members out of something like 2½ millions of trade unionists in the country, and only represent 395 trade unions out of a total of 1,173; and will further see that these figures are confined to a very large extent to very fluctuating industries like shipbuilding and engineering, while entirely ignoring the much larger percentage of trade unionists engaged in more stable industries, such as the textile. He will recognise that these figures, although they may give the comparative data from year to year, are absolutely useless, indeed worse, they are entirely misleading as a basis on which to establish in any way the number of unemployed in this country. Attention has been drawn to this fact more than once. Mr. W. H. Beveridge, in his excellent work *Unemployment: A Problem of Industry*, deals fully with this subject; and Professor Bowley, in an article published in the *Journal of the Statistical Society*, in September, 1908, refers to the recognition of the existing imperfections and defects of these statistics on unemployment; adding that although they are published monthly in the papers, hardly as much stress is laid upon them as they deserve, perhaps from a consciousness of their difficulty. Now none of these figures, as I have said, give us any idea at all of the length of time individuals returned as unemployed have been out of work. Neither do they give us any information as to the cause of unemployment, such as the effect of the weather. I think we might learn something from some of the American returns. I consider the returns of the Labour Bureau of the State of Massachusetts really the best figures dealing with unemployment and the unemployed which I know. They, at any rate, do state why a man is out of work: from want of stock or stress of weather or from other causes. They do endeavour to get some separation of that kind. But, after all, it is not much value for you to know people are out of work in the building trade in certain months, one year with another, if you have nothing to tell you why. It is obvious that in one year, with a severe winter, there would be a very much larger amount of unemployment in the building trade than in a year when you have a very mild winter, and unless you add explanations of that character, the figures in themselves are perfectly useless to the social student.

Fluctuations in Employment

Some figures were published in a report on trade unions in 1905–7, unfortunately only from three unions, but they are

important unions, the Amalgamated Engineers, the Amalgamated Carpenters and Joiners, and the London Compositors. They are not based on all classes of members, but only on some, yet these figures are the only ones I have been able to find, and they are of considerable interest. They deal with the following proportions—that is, the proportion to the total membership of those who were unemployed in a given year for three days or more, but less than four weeks.

Among the Amalgamated Engineers the percentage was 9.5 in a good year, and in a bad year 13.9; Carpenters and Joiners, in a good year 15.4; in a bad year 18.3. For four weeks or more in a good year the Engineers had 9.1, in a bad year 21.1—a most remarkable rise in the figures; Carpenters and Joiners, four weeks or more unemployment was in a good year 4.3 per cent., and in a bad year 24.8. These figures do show the enormous fluctuations in these trades between good years of trade and bad years of trade, showing that in those trades, to a large extent, unemployment was not chronic, but a fluctuating condition. The average number of working days lost by all members in a good year was nine days for Engineers and three days for Joiners—extremely good figures. They mean, if you average up all the members, they lost only an average of nine and three days in each trade. But in a bad year the Engineers lost twenty-three days and the Joiners nineteen. Now, the curious thing is, when you come to look at the average number of working days lost by unemployed members, you find that these figures are very much higher, and they increase very much with age. Between the ages of 55 and 65 the percentage of days lost by unemployed members in a bad year may go up to ninety-eight. What does it tend to teach? It tends obviously to show that what might be expected happens—namely, that in a bad year the inefficient workman is the first man to lose his job. The oldest man, 60 to 65 years of age, no longer capable of producing a maximum amount of work, is the man who soonest loses his employment and has most difficulty in regaining it. They further show that the unemployed members relatively lose a larger number of days than the average members. Another conclusion to be drawn from the figures is that the unemployed members in themselves are on the whole the least desirable; that is to say, you find that the best workman is probably losing no time at all, but that there are a considerable number of less efficient or less desirable out of work. It is useful to keep this in mind when considering remedies.

German Statistics

Now, as I have stated, our statistics are very unsatisfactory. Unfortunately, other countries are not in a much better position. I have been very disappointed indeed with Germany. We are so used to look to that country as one where people revel in statistics and figures, always preparing them with enormous elaboration, if not with equal accuracy. I was in hopes of being able to learn a good deal on this subject from German statistics. But I noticed that Professor Otto Most, who I am very glad to see has kindly contributed a paper to our section, dealt with the subject in The English Review in September and October last in two articles on German Unemployment. According to him, Germany has done a great deal as far as quantity is concerned, but very little indeed from the point of view of quality. It would take me too long to go into any very detailed examination of this subject. For one thing, I could never understand why the Board of Trade cannot improve its statistics. Many more unions than those included in the *Labour Gazette* returns give unemployed benefits, and I feel sure that if pressure were brought to bear upon the secretaries of those other unions, they also would furnish the requisite material. I am perfectly sure, with energy and goodwill, something could be done in that direction.

A Central Statistical Department

At present the lack of a Central Statistical Department by our Government leaves us in a state of hopeless chaos and confusion. One of the greatest troubles of social reformers in this country is that they are continually having shot at them from different Government Departments enormous masses of uncollated and unexplained statistics. One day we get something from the Board of Trade, the Local Government Board publishes another a week afterwards, and then the Home Office suddenly thinks it is being left behind, and issues a mighty Memorandum. All these publications cover, to some extent, the same ground, and you and I have to wade through enormous quantities of figures and Blue Books to try to extract some grain of knowledge. If we had a proper Statistical Department to deal with all the statistics of the British nation and British Government, whether relating to the work of the Treasury, the Home Office, the Local Government Board, or the Board of Trade, not only would our statistical information be infinitely better, but the amount of

work now thrown on anyone following this subject would be much reduced.

Unemployment of the Unskilled

Now, it has been very commonly assumed that the amount of unemployment among unskilled workers is very much higher than among skilled workers. I have never been able to find any statistical foundation for this assumption. The unskilled worker in a single trade naturally goes out of work sooner than the skilled worker, but that is not, to my mind, a true statement of affairs if you take the whole of the country together. Undoubtedly, in so far as every skilled man in an industry probably has two labourers to assist him, as in the shipbuilding industry, or in the building industry, you will find in those trades a larger amount of unskilled labour out of work than skilled labour. But remember that a large amount of unskilled labour is engaged in agriculture, in transport, and in industrial occupations of an exceptionally permanent character; while we must furthermore include in our census figures the whole class of domestic servants. In presence of these facts, I think the unemployment throughout the country must be less than would be assumed from the Board of Trade statistics. Certainly this would be the case when the official figures yield such an exceptionally high result as they did in the last few years owing to the great depression in the shipbuilding industry. Professor Bowley estimates that 200,000 or fewer able-bodied adult males are out of work for non-seasonal causes one year with another, this number fluctuating between 100,000 in the best year to 300,000 in the worst—figures which also appear to reduce the magnitude of the problem very considerably. I would like to point out the extraordinary fact that in twelve months our Board of Trade unemployment figures have changed from 8.2 to 2.8 per cent., which must be evidence to everybody who has thought over the matter how very much overweighted they are by one particular industry. We know that a change of that magnitude and character has not taken place within the last twelve months in British industry. Anyone engaged in trade knows that trade was very good last year, and is very good this year; but if you go into it you will find that because the shipping industry was depressed for two years, and because the proportion of people engaged in the shipbuilding yards so overweight the Board of Trade returns, you suddenly get, by a sort of magical somersault, a reversal of the figures,

8.2 to 2.8 per cent. It almost seems like a conjuring trick, but in reality the figure was never 8.2 per cent., and I do not suppose is now 2.8 per cent.

Causes of Unemployment

Now we have, of course, to consider what are the leading causes of unemployment in this country. I should put prominently among them the fluctuations in the consumption of the world's markets. Fluctuation in the world's markets is, of course, due to several circumstances, but is most largely caused by variations in the world's harvest, agricultural production being that which is least under the control of human agencies. When I commenced I said the purely agricultural country suffered from lack of work as well as the industrial one, if its harvest failed. Even now we indirectly feel in our industrial world the effect of the failure of harvests in the reduced demand for goods in exchange for the agricultural produce which those people produce. Therefore a drought in Australia, failure of the maize crop in Argentina, failure of the monsoon in India, early or late frost in Canada, pest in South America—all these things largely affect our state of employment by affecting the demand for our goods. Now, with a better organization, a greater knowledge of the condition of the world's markets, and better means of communication, we certainly know more, and estimate better, what the consumption of the world is likely to be in the immediate future than we could in the past. For all that, it is impossible for producers at present to estimate the demand in advance with sufficient accuracy to enable them really to regulate the supply in accordance therewith. Even in industries which are fairly stable it is very difficult, notwithstanding all statistics of demand, for the manufacturer to know exactly what production and consumption will be a year or two ahead. And although a manufacturer naturally endeavours not to produce more than the market will absorb, and does not go out of his way to employ labour which is not likely to be permanent, still the fluctuation in the state of the world's consumption produces a margin over which he has as yet no control. Yet that cyclical variation in trade is perhaps one of the greatest causes of lack of work, one of the chief factors in what we call unemployment.

We are better off in some ways than purely agricultural communities. In the latter, when the crop fails—it used to

happen to us when we were a purely agricultural community—there is a famine, and the hand of death again reduces the surplus population to the margin of subsistence. At any rate, in our industrial community, we can average that risk, because there is no famine everywhere in the world at the same time, and we are more certain of being able to find people who will exchange their products for ours than a purely agricultural community. We can always be certain of being able to exchange products for food-stuffs. Of course, unemployment may be almost non-existent in a country with a very low average standard of life. In many agricultural countries you find this to be the case. They have not got the same problem we have; but they have a problem of their own. Everybody is very badly off, but nobody intensely badly off; and that is, of course, more characteristic of agricultural communities than of our own.

The next cause is somewhat connected with the first—a monetary crisis, a financial crisis disturbing and curtailing the credit of the world, and thereby disturbing and curtailing demand and production. A third and very important cause is seasonal interruption of employment—as in the building trade and many others which are, by their very nature, bound to be slacker in the winter months than they are in the summer. In countries where the climate is more severe but less variable than ours, those engaged in such industries have been forced to accommodate themselves to a much greater extent to that condition of things. In countries where you cannot build in winter, everybody knows the number of months of idleness to expect, and he has to lay by in the summer in order to live through the winter, and it is very remarkable to what an extent even the poorly paid, accustomed to this necessary prudence, succeed at any rate in keeping themselves alive through the hibernating months. In England our climate is irregular. Frequently you can build factories throughout the whole winter. Sometimes we are interrupted for a relatively short time, sometimes for a long time, and when these long interruptions occur, our building industries, which have not accommodated themselves to those conditions, see all the people engaged in them thrown out of work, with the result that we have a larger amount of acute distress. This is not confined to the building industry—I merely use that as an instance. There are a number of other industries, such as constructional engineering, in the same position.

A fourth cause is changes in the character of industries.

That, of course, is a cause not always noticed, although we have striking examples of it. The substitution of motor traction for horse traction in a very few years, with its effect not only on those engaged in horse traction, but on those engaged in concomitant industries, is a noteworthy example of a sudden change among a whole class of workers. It is remarkable that on the whole so little disturbance has been caused by the change, and it is extraordinary how those affected have accommodated themselves to it so well. A change like that must cause, at the time, and for a considerable period, a great amount of unemployment. People who have been brought up to the harness and saddlery trade find it difficult suddenly to change round. Indeed, it is almost impossible for them to go into other industries. The extension of machinery, although ultimately it will produce greater employment, can temporarily occasion displacement. The removal of industries from one district to another, as well as change in their character, coupled, as it very often is, with absence of fluidity in the labour supply, is another cause of unemployment. You often find that workmen remain for a long time in the vicinity of declining or dead works instead of moving, or being moved, to districts where their labour is in demand.

One of the causes which has not, I think, been mentioned, of want of demand, and therefore of want of work, has always been a cessation or reduction of English investments abroad. In order to create a demand for our industrial products, it is essential to develop and enrich new countries, and thus to increase their purchasing power. This policy has been unconsciously pursued by British investors for many years. Owing to the drain upon our resources by the South African War we had no money to invest abroad, and the result was that our trade fell off very much. It is only since we have once more accumulated sufficient capital to be able to exercise that stimulating influence on our export trade which investment of capital in foreign countries has always had, that our exports have again increased. You have seen since 1904 a continual increase in our export trade, culminating in the unprecedented figures of the last two or three years. It would take me too far from our subject to go into this matter in detail. It has been very fully dealt with by such competent authorities as Sir Edgar Speyer, Mr. George Paish, and others, who have statistically established the interesting fact that the growth of our exports of manufactures is in almost immediate connection with the expansion of our investments of capital abroad.

Trade Unionism

I sometimes think that our rigid trade union system is apt to cause want of work as far as their own members are concerned. The rigidity of wage conditions results in a lack of elasticity which often prevents an employer from obtaining orders, say in competition with firms abroad in time of trade depression, which he could obtain if a new bargain could be made with his men for that particular job. I am thinking more particularly of the engineering trade. In cases where a firm has to compete with Belgium, for instance, for contracts in India, Japan, or elsewhere, a reduction in piece rates would enable them to take the contract and provide employment in circumstances in which unemployment would otherwise be inevitable. Now I am quite ready to admit the enormous difficulties, from a practical point of view, of a trade union adopting such a course. I am quite aware that they would say that those rates would immediately become the standard for the whole country, and the objection is undoubtedly a very serious one. I do not pretend at the moment to see my way to overcome it, but I do think it is worth our while to see whether we could not introduce more elasticity, because, obviously, the trade union would benefit if it kept people off the unemployed books, workmen would benefit, the trade of the country would benefit. I am the last person in the world to attempt to beat down or to reduce trade union wages, but I do think our state of industry to-day has become so complex that the old rules, largely an inheritance from the ancient guild system, can no longer be applied with the same rigidity as in the past.

Drunkenness

How far is drink a factor in our unemployment? I think in the last class I have to deal with—the unemployable—that drink is an enormously large factor—a much larger factor than people have been ready to admit. I do not think anyone who has carefully investigated the subject would deny for a moment that an enormous percentage, of those who have gone down among our unemployable, owe their fall to drink. Nor do I think anyone with practical experience would deny that many able lives have been wrecked by it, not only in the working classes, but in all classes. This is not the time to deliver a temperance lecture, nor do I intend to do so; but I would say this, that the one thing which strikes all

people who come from our colonies—and only recently I had it impressed on me by some of our Canadian friends—is the immense amount of drinking that goes on here as compared with the Dominion. The Canadian finds it difficult to understand why we permit what is obviously and generally admitted to be a large factor in creating the unemployable to go on as untrammelled as we do. Everything that tends to diminish efficiency among working men, such as bad houses, lack of sanitation, bad conditions of work, all tend to increase unemployment. It is obvious that a very considerable proportion of the unemployed are in good years out of work owing to some physical or moral defect. They are the men who cannot keep pace with the rest of the industrial army in productive capacity, the intensity of which is constantly increasing, and every man receiving a wage superior to his productive capacity is an economic loss to the country, and can, probably, only secure employment when profits are high.

Population Question

There is one factor which I hope will be more fully investigated than it has ever been in the past, and that is the question of population. What is the relation of population to unemployment? We know there is a tendency in all organic life to increase itself to the limits of the law of the minimum of subsistence, and this tendency also exists in the human race. There, however, it is tempered by counteracting influences of civilization; that is to say, where a community has reached a certain standard of comfort, the population will apparently not grow at a rate seriously to endanger the maintenance of the average attained. Now, although this is a very important point bearing on all social questions, and especially that which we are considering, I have not been able to find—it may be my fault—any real investigation of the laws that determine the growth of population. I hope that many who are attending this congress, and who are able social students, will devote some time and attention to the question. You will see that it has an enormous bearing on the problem of what we call the reserve of labour. While population goes on increasing in a haphazard way, you are continually trying to fill a bucket with no bottom if you try to provide employment for everybody, for if at a given moment you find employment for everybody, the population immediately shoots ahead again and produces more population living just below the margin of employment. On the other hand, we do see, and it is the

most extraordinary phenomenon which we witnessed in the nineteenth century, how the population of the world has grown in order to meet the demand that exists for labour. The population of England remained almost stationary for centuries, and yet in the nineteenth century we always produced enough population to meet our growing demand for labour, and usually rather more. What are the laws which govern this phenomenon? Why do we not produce a great deal too much or a great deal too little? That is a subject which I think calls for the most careful investigation. Again, there appears to be some fundamental law by which the standard of subsistence arrived at seems to govern the growth of population. I am not speaking here of what are called artificial checks—I believe their importance in this question is immensely exaggerated—I believe the fundamental laws must lie much deeper than any human agency; because, after all, if you take a country like India, the race reproduces itself certainly, but not in accordance with the standard which prevails in Europe. The factors and causes involved in this are extremely obscure. I cannot see my way through them, but it is essential that they should be studied if we really are to arrive at any right comprehension of this question.

Industries of Luxury

It cannot be disputed that industries create their own population. From this point of view industries of luxury and fashion are far from being good economically—they are bad economically. It is thought that by stimulating trade you are making the money go round, and doing a large amount of good to the country, but that is a superficial view of the economics of the question. You establish these industries of luxury and fashion, but you also create the population to carry them on; both are extraordinarily fluctuating. The industry of fashion is the most fluctuating thing imaginable. The industry of luxury, the first which is depressed, goes down as soon as the economic conditions are unfavourable, and then you have got a large population for whom you have no employment. It is this which has led me to the conclusion that the concentration of large wealth in a few hands is by no means a good thing for the economic condition of a country. A general diffusion of wealth creates a demand for staple commodities which is much more likely to produce an equal level of employment than the concentration of wealth in a few hands, which tends

to be spent in a fantastic or capricious manner, and can be diverted at any moment at the will of the owner.

Remedies

I am afraid I am detaining you longer than I had intended, but I will now pass on rapidly to some of the remedies which have been suggested, some of the remedies which have occurred to me, and which I think suitable for future discussion. I am not one of those who imagine you will ever find a complete remedy for unemployment by providing work for everybody. As a matter of fact, I do not believe anybody does—anybody who has studied the subject seriously. The causes are various, so that the remedies also must differ, according to the different conditions and opportunities. Obviously you cannot apply the same remedy to the engineer out of work, because of lack of work, and to the man "dossing" on the Embankment in London, and who has not done a decent day's work for years. It would be very like treating people who have a cold in their head as you would those suffering from alcoholic poisoning. We are becoming more and more social doctors, and the one bottle of coloured water—the fashionable prescription for social ills—is giving way to careful examination and more careful antitoxin treatment.

Among the remedies, dealing firstly with those who want work, who can work, but who cannot obtain work, I think it is this class for whom the Unemployment Insurance Bill, now before the House of Commons, will be most useful. Up to now the skilled trades have, through their trade unions, really saved the State a great deal of anxiety by providing their own remedy for unemployment by insurance, and they have rendered good service to the community by meeting the whole wave of industrial depression so far as their members are concerned. If all the labouring population of the country were organized in a similar way, a very great part of the problem of unemployment would be solved; that is to say, we should let them shoulder the burden of unemployment which belongs to all of us, and call them noble and self-sacrificing people. But it is not fair to put the whole economic burden of depression on the working classes engaged in industry. Employers are concerned also in the problem, I think, because they have not taken their fair share in the task of keeping up the reserve of labour. Supposing we were very short of labour, employers would devote much more time to make certain they could get workmen when they wanted them. Probably they would be

glad to pay a retaining fee to have them at call, just as they take trouble about their raw material; in fact, we have always had a crude system of finding workers whenever we want them, which has made employers careless. In countries where the labour difficulty prevails, you see a very different state of things obtaining; you see the trouble employers have to get labour. It has occurred to me whether the employer requiring a reserve of labour was not the right man really to bear the burden of having his labour at hand. In the theatrical profession the payment of understudies is a well-recognised practice. The payment of an understudy is really a payment for a reserve in case of breakdown, and the same rule should to some extent apply in other industries. It seems to me, however, unreasonable that the employer should bear the whole charge of economic depression, and the proposal to divide the burden between the employer, the workmen, and the State, as it is done in the National Insurance Bill—a measure which commends itself to fair-minded people—has always seemed to me to be the most equitable solution of this problem.

I wish to congratulate the Government on having made a start. I know it has taken a great deal of courage, because the results obtained thus far by experiments in this direction have been very unsatisfactory, and of a negative character. In Switzerland, in Germany, in Belgium, municipal unemployment insurance has been tried on many occasions, and it has always failed, and all the reports which have been made by investigators have been of a most discouraging kind. I think there are two reasons for that. One, because the schemes have been too local in application; local application of unemployed relief must fail as an economic absurdity. Unemployment is national; it is never a local condition. It is a ridiculous thing to put on localities which are already suffering from unemployment the further burden of dealing with the unemployed, because it does not equalize the burden all over the country with districts that are in a fair state of employment. Other reasons are because there has been no real selection; and that there has been a lack of the agencies and machinery which we shall have under the Government Bill and of the discipline and honesty of the English trade unionists. We can do a great many things in this country which cannot be done in others. Our working population is under discipline. It is, indeed, very well disciplined in industrial matters, and extremely honest. It has been used for years to contribute, to receive benefits, and to look after itself. I know that any

contribution we give from the employer or the State will be just as carefully looked after as their own contributions were in the old time. I therefore welcome this great experiment, and I trust we may regard it as a hopeful effort to eliminate, at any rate, much misery, keep up the standard of maintenance, hold families together more or less, and maintain efficiency among that very large class who want work but, for the moment. cannot find it. To chase these people from casual ward to casual ward, to set them to break stones and dig holes which nobody wants, or to make roads that are not required, was the most irrational thing the human mind could conceive as a means of helping the unemployed. Fortunately, the dark ages when those ideas prevailed are, I think, rapidly passing away. The Labour Exchanges are already beginning to show their value. Mr. Winston Churchill said the other day in the House of Commons that they had advanced £2,400 to workmen in travelling benefits to enable them to reach their work, and that they had already been repaid £2,200 of that money. You can trust the working-men of England to treat you honestly. I think this side of the Labour Exchanges will probably have to be extended. One of our difficulties—a recognised difficulty—is the lack of fluidity of labour. This is owing, to some extent, to a large extent perhaps, to the enormous expense to workmen of breaking up their homes in one place and fitting up others at a distance. Moving, for a workman, is a very great expense, which he often cannot afford. So he hangs on in the hope of something turning up, simply because he cannot get away. We must distribute labour—not encourage it to stop where it is by local relief works.

Relief Works

If you must have recourse to relief works of any character you should do useful work where it is wanted, and take the people where they are wanted, even to the outskirts of this country. We have the example of India. The Indian Government, acting with much intelligence and foresight, can draft an enormous population from one district to another, and do really useful work. We ourselves seem to have learnt very little from all that work in India, where they have a department and machinery ready to be put into action the moment it is required. What do we do here? If times are good everybody is quite happy; if times get bad we have a few unemployment processions, somebody asks a few questions in the House of Commons, town councils suddenly hold emergency meetings,

and in the middle of the trouble they begin to do what ought to have been done years before. A repetition of that process is really heart-breaking, particularly when you think that in India, where they deal with an alien population which can neither read nor write, and are difficult to move and inefficient, they take millions of them, transport them from one province into another province, and succeed in doing something useful with their labour. I think the amount of ineffective and non-economical work which we have done in this country is a real blot on our system.

Child Labour and Reduction of Hours

Among other remedies that have been advocated, certainly with some effect, are the diminution of child labour and a reduction of hours. The reduction of hours, from my experience in our works, is really compensated for by increased efficiency to such a large extent as to provide very little increased employment. The diminution of child labour will also not have very immediate effect on employment, but it will have a very large effect in the future; for by diminishing child labour there will be a better training of the children, better education of the children; you will bring your next generation up to a level at which your unemployables ought practically to disappear. Your unemployable is very often not a bad man, but he is frequently stupid and untrained. If that man had been trained as a child he would have been a valuable person. In the next generation I hope we shall get rid of a large amount of untrained material. One of my firms has started technical classes even for grown-up workmen in subjects such as engineering, with lectures by members of our own staff. We found it had a great effect in training and in increasing the efficiency of the workmen, a point that has not been considered very much in this country.

In Germany they have a great technical university, with thousands of pupils, and all of them grown-up men engaged in factory work, largely foremen or the better artisans, with practical experience of the factory, who take a course in order to learn the necessary theory. The results have been surprisingly good, and very valuable indeed to industry by increasing the efficiency of the workmen. It is not unnatural that a man who has had a lot of practical knowledge should pick up theoretical knowledge much quicker than a child who has no practical knowledge, who cannot co-ordinate, who cannot understand really the application of theory to anything

practical. Perhaps there are there as many as three thousand students a year, remaining from one to two years, very often paid for by their employers in order to learn the theoretical part of their work, which they have never been able to learn before they became workmen.

Then as to the instruction for boys. Young boys should be kept at technical classes; the attendance should be made compulsory, and it should be the rule that boys not attending a night school should not be allowed to be engaged. As an indication of what may be done in this direction I may mention the rules laid down by Brunner, Mond & Co. in their works: "Boys under the age of 14 will not be employed, nor will persons 14 to 18 years old who have not previously passed the sixth standard in a day school or night school. All young persons (not apprentices) under the age of 19, or who reach the age of 19 during the session, shall attend evening classes at least nine times out of ten during the evening school session. Apprentices shall so attend during the whole period of their apprenticeship, unless specially exempt on the ground that they have been chosen to attend day classes." All these educational matters would tend to help us in the future, and, after all, it is to the future one very largely looks.

Emigration and Labour Colonies

One safety-valve I will refer to for a moment—that is emigration. As famine used to be the safety-valve for an overgrown population in the old times, so emigration is the safety-valve for the modern State which has got a congested population. But emigration will not take from us our defectives; emigration only takes from us those whom we can ill spare. Our colonies want, rightly, I think, good and able men. Any man who has been over in Canada and other colonies knows that the ineffective man here would die of starvation under the rough conditions of those countries. He would be quite useless for any purpose. We have a large number of those who are morally or physically deficient workers, and what we have to do is to convert these defectives into efficients. Our problem is a very difficult one; we have got to deal with people of weak or bad character. Nobody says you will always be successful, whatever remedies you adopt, but for all that a great deal can be done.

I should like to say a word on behalf of the labour colony. Now labour colonies have been held up as failures; we have been told how much a cabbage costs to grow in such a colony, and for

how much less it could be purchased in the market-garden. We are told it is a gross waste of public money. In fact, the existence of the labour colony has been threatened. But nobody expects St. Bartholomew's Hospital to produce a dividend; nobody expects an ailing person to be earning full wages. The labour colony is not an economically productive unit; the labour colony is a place in which we try to reclaim human beings, and unless you look at it in that way you absolutely ignore its object. I remember a visit I paid to Hollesley Bay some years ago. I was not impressed by its failure; but I was by its colossal success. I saw people who not many months before had been in street slums, browned and tanned, digging fields, learning agriculture, and becoming useful workers on the land or elsewhere. Some drift back, certainly; but no doctor will undertake that every one of his patients will be cured. A great many of them die, but for all that you do not say that medical science ought to be done away with, and that doctors ought to be abolished, and because every case is not cured you do not say the hospitals ought to be pulled down. These social hospitals want to be increased—they want to be regarded in a rational way. I am perfectly convinced a very great deal can be done for these people by good labour colonies. Even if we cannot see the benefits at once, we shall in time, and be able to restore these men and their families to a decent life, and rid our streets of all that visitors to our great towns must regard as a disgrace.

The "Work-Shy"

Now there is one class extremely difficult to deal with indeed, and that is the "work-shy." We all know them; they are usually the people in the unemployment processions, usually the people who get from the charity of the English people what the real unemployed ought to have, but which they are too proud to ask for. They are not necessarily incapable of work, but they have a constitutional dislike to work. Now, the only way of dealing with these people is a rather violent way; they have got to be made to work, and we have got to make up our minds either to make them work or leave them alone to do the best they can. Are we ready to go back to a somewhat mediæval practice? There were days when men who would not work were put in the stocks and flogged in front of the village green. That must have had an excellent moral effect on the idle and incorrigible rogue, on the "work-shy" of that time and place. I do not think we need go as far as that, however; but are

we prepared to go as far as they have gone in Germany, and start detention labour colonies to which these people shall be sent? They would not be treated badly or harshly, but they would not be treated luxuriously, nor would they be made to break stones and pick oakum as in the workhouse wards, which is both stupid, useless, and degrading. They would be put to do some work in which they could take an interest.

The German detention colonies are still a matter of experiment, and some reformers there will tell you they have been a great failure. I will not give you any *ex cathedra* opinion, but you will see that Professor Most, a considerable authority on this subject, in a paper which will be read here later, hopes that further developments of the system will lead to better results. Of course, he says, there have been only about 25 per cent. permanently reclaimed, while a large number relapse; but even if you only reclaim a fourth or a fifth, you will be doing a great amount of good.

I do not believe that the work-shy population is a very large one. I do not believe that it amounts to much in numbers, although the processions going round the streets, like a procession on the stage, seem to impress the public with an idea of magnitude. But when once we have them out of the way, when we have the physically or morally inefficient either segregated or placed in a position to become efficient, when we have separated those who could work but would not work from those who would work but are temporarily or seasonally out of employment, we shall have our task clearly before us. We shall know where we are, which will be an immense advantage to everyone engaged in social reform. When we have that classification we can easily deal with the exceptions, with those who are left.

Many methods have been advocated, and many others will follow, I have no doubt, with experience and time, and we may adopt some of them; but your patience, on which I have already made great demands, will not permit me longer to detain you to deal with them at all extensively. The subject is enormous, and can at present only be dealt with generally in connection with the immediate proposition before us. We shall fill up the details as the conference goes on, as the papers are read, and as our discussions proceed.

I am very glad to find that the interest which is now taken in this subject has become so widespread among all classes. This indicates a greater sense of social responsibility than I think we have ever before had manifested in the world. We all

now feel that we are our brother's keeper; we all now feel that we are each of us responsible for certain economic conditions of our country; we all now feel that we ought not to allow personal interest to stand in the way of national welfare. Well, that is an enormous step forward, full of encouragement and hope. Many capable and earnest workers, not only here, but in all civilized countries, are working at this problem. This is an inestimable advantage, enabling us as it does to put the experiments of the whole world into our crucible and there extract from them the refined gold of social reform. Perfect we shall never make our imperfect world; neither shall we convert men into angels; but we can bring some order out of chaos; we can relieve much of the suffering that exists; we can prevent some waste of human life and happiness. I am glad to be able to welcome here to-day many distinguished workers in this great field, and I am confident that our deliberations will lead to valuable results. In the solution of social problems there are two great requisites—knowledge and courage; knowledge to teach us what to do—courage to go and do it. A good many people have too much knowledge—so much that they lose all courage. Some people have too much courage and no knowledge, and rush blindly into paths that lead to disaster and retard social reform. With these two essential qualities let us not be afraid of arriving at logical conclusions, and when arrived at let us not fear to carry them out. Everyone agrees in theory, but in practice many say the thing is impossible. Not at all; nothing is impossible to those who apply to social problems the spirit expressed in the phrase of Danton during the French Revolution: "Il nous faut de l'audace, et encore de l'audace, et toujours de l'audace."

Lady Diana Goes to the Ballet

THE Lady Diana, who was a very grand person in Society, looked up the meaning of the word "choreography," and took a party to the Russian Ballet.

"It's a new thing," she said, "choreography they call it; but personally I think this *Cleopatra* ballet rather tiresome, don't you—too long?" And her friends mostly agreed.

But there was one occupant of her box who boldly dissented.

He said simply, "I think *Cleopatra* is the most beautiful spectacle I ever saw."

"Really! I suppose, being a man, you think so because of its *décolletage*."

"No," he retorted, "it is just a superb artistic design, carried out as no stage performance ever is in England, the whole idea and execution being in the hands of artists, directed towards one end—unity."

"So is the grand scene in the pantomime at the Lane, isn't it?" interposed the lady who had come in "just for half an hour."

"If you like, yes, but the difference is essential. It is the difference between the amateur and the professional—say, that of a work by Augustus John and a conventional portrait by a worthy R.A. The one is traditional, commercial; the Russian ballet is creative."

"Inspired," said Lady Diana, "of course; but where is the Censor? That's what I want to know."

"The Censor," answered the mild, placid man. "Well, you saw *Sumurūn*, didn't you? Yet that was passed. We cannot stop everything, after all. Remember, we were allowed to see *Samson and Delila* for the first time last year. We are getting on. A good part of *Cleopatra* has been suppressed, too. But remember, we see nothing to censor in the love music of *Tristram and Isolde*. It is only a matter of custom, believe me. We have got into a habit of judging art on an eighteen-year-old standard, that is all. We take our sports like men, but art is subjugated to the exigency of the *jeune fille tartine*."

"*Jeune fille* what?" inquired Lady Diana.

"The bread-and-butter miss," said the man; "Maud Allen, if you prefer it."

"I see; but tell me what is it you see that is so beautiful in this *Cleopatra?*"

The man, who wore a beard, muttered something inaudible.

"The details," he said, "the harmony, the music, the whole. Take, now, the best things we do on our stage—the musical comedies. Now there are plenty of pretty girls, but they cannot dance. Most of them have had no stage-training at all. Take the music; it is not quite serious, is it? There is some difference between Glazounov's *Bacchanale* and that popular dirge 'Yip-i-addy,' you must admit. Or look at the grouping, the stage arrangements. In *Cleopatra* it is all controlled by an artist. There is a single eye and hand over it all. And then it is a splendid historical illustration, a presentation of Egyptian life in the time of Cleopatra more vivid than a hundred written descriptions, real as the wonderful scene between Cleopatra and the messenger of Shakespeare. Look at these Grecian-Egyptian dances. Think of the processional entry. And that spot of black at the end against the gold silence of the temple. Why, the thing is pulsating with life. All the barbaric splendour of that age is conjured up in that Nilotic pageantry of love. You think it dull. I think it superb, inspiring, absolutely beautiful. You see the best dancing the world can produce. You see a living picture designed by real artists. You have delicious music, delicious colour—rhythm. As for the Censor, the man who deems *Cleopatra* immoral had better go down on his knees and pray for a cleaner spirit."

"You are getting quite heated. It's a lecture," said Lady Diana.

"Oh, no, only a protest. You see I'm indignant at this Philistinism in art of ours, for we English are splendidly creative. It is our apathy towards the arts that rouses me. Why see, this *Cleopatra*, all that we have seen to-night is taken from the brain of an Englishman who, because he was a prophet in his own land, was rejected and despised of men."

"I don't quite understand," and the Lady Diana turned upon him her famous Luini smile.

"I know. That's it. You think this is a Russian discovery, don't you? You see this house chock-full of people applauding what they consider to be some Muscovite revelation. In part it is. The dancing is Russian, the music is Russian, the splendid unity of design is Russian. But that

beautiful blue hanging in *Carneval*, the lighting and colour scheme of the stage that you liked so much in *Pavillon d'Armide*, in *Igor*, in *Spectre de la Rose*, where do you think the idea of that came from? From Paris? From St. Petersburg? You loved *Sumurūn*, I know. Well, *Sumurūn* was taken from these Russian choreographic ballets—from *Cleopatra*, *Antar*, *Scheherazade*, etc. But where do you imagine the Russians got theirs from? Let me tell you. Ten years ago the Russian ballet had no such thing. It is a new art, and, strange as it may seem to you, it came from England."

The lady who came in late began to think of escape. She had three parties to go on to, and was in no mood for such talk.

"Oh, Bernard Shaw, I suppose," she said; and her remark made the placid man smile all over his face.

"No, not quite," he answered, "though something of the same idea must have been in his head when he wrote the first act of his *Cleopatra*. The rhythm of beauty is in that act, but this time we are not indebted to an Irishman. The man I am thinking of is the son of indubitably the greatest English actress of our generation, Ellen Terry."

"Really! Now, I never even heard of him," said the Lady Diana.

"Quite so. That is why I am protesting. We don't use our true artists. We seem to have lost the art of seeing art. I repeat, the whole choreographic idea emanated from this artistically ignorant, right-little, tight-little island, and if we had been more perceptive and less insular we should have shown Europe this new stage art instead of obtaining it back second-hand, like a receiver of stolen goods. And yet he revealed it to us. He opened his shop, presented his wares, invited us all, sciolist, patron, critic, and professional, into his sanctuary. We laughed, just as we laughed at Wagner, and still laugh at Ibsen. Our *tartine* standard of art feared and mocked the new idea, and there is nothing the bread-and-butter miss fears more than ideas. We shut down the scuppers and drove the man out of the country. That is what we did."

"Oh, do go on! I simply must know his name."

"You shall, dear Lady Diana," said the man. "You have seen the new choreographic art. It has conquered Russia, Berlin, Paris, and it is now conquering London. The man who gave that beautiful new stage art to Europe is, as I have said, an Englishman, and his name is Gordon Craig."

Book Notices

FICTION

The "Memorial" Meredith: Meredith's Fiction from "The Shaving of Shagpat" to "Harry Richmond."

The publication by Messrs. Constable of their pleasant and appropriate Memorial Edition of George Meredith's works is an opportunity for new reflection upon the leading qualities of a great writer. Meredith's first essays in fiction (*The Shaving of Shagpat*, *Farina*) were, like his first essays in poetry, imitative; but for a different reason: in his verse he imitated other poets because he was not a poet himself; in his fiction, because he was. His imagination was so fresh and riotous, that it took the bit between its teeth, leapt all the humdrum fences that enclose the realist, and submitted itself to the guidance of reason in the aim only, not in the manner, of its career. As to the aim, it is from the first profoundly moral; his writing is that of a man who takes his experience with an extreme seriousness and is determined to share its lessons almost before they are learnt. But this very seriousness acts as a spur to the impulses of whimsicality and paradox; for how else is it to be concealed? It would be safe to say that no more fantastic imagery has been, perhaps could be, contrived than that about which the allegory of Shagpat centres, with "thwackings" and a head to be shaved as negative and positive incentives to the reformer's zeal. Nor when Meredith, coming nearer home, affects to write a simple romance of mediæval Germany, can he forbear to indulge what we might almost call the wantonness of intellect, and now it is our olfactory sensations that he seizes upon for a symbol of the lesson he has to preach. These freaks and perversities, extravagant and even distressing as they are, are yet in a sense the main feature of Meredith's first flourish before the world in prose; for, although only describable as faults, they are faults of which he never wholly rid himself; the impulse which produced them is characteristic and essential in him, and begets, beside a thousand vagaries of plot, incident, character, and dialogue, that bitter flavour in his style which conceals its richness and aroma from so many persons of a simple unsophisticated taste, and leads them to reject it as unpalatable. The same restless activity of imagination, which drove him to the luxuriant East for a model for his

first prose work, gave a touch of the fanciful, the enigmatic, the recondite to almost every line he wrote, and ended by becoming a mannerism. "It cannot be," he writes in 1906, "that Croydon will consent to be ranked as one of the crazy," toying with paradox and alliteration even in an election manifesto.

Meredith's immense energy of mind, if it can be connected with certain peculiarities and foibles, is also naturally at the root of his stature and strength. Without doubt, the most striking feature of his early fiction, viewed in the bulk, is its extraordinary range. Not one of these novels but trenches upon ground unworked before, directs an original attack upon some fresh problem, social, personal, political, and introduces the reader to characters and circumstances of which the only common feature is that they are drawn by the same hand. He has, at the same time, a most exacting standard both as to the scale on which a work of fiction is to be conceived by its author and as to the acuteness of attention to which it is entitled from its reader. Nor does he flinch before any of the conventional requirements. Some great novelists, whose interest in humanity strikes like Meredith's to the roots of life, have supposed that it was the highest fulfilment of their art to reserve it for the revelation of the more central of the subtler issues of our spiritual development. But Meredith is not content till he has brought his characters to the test of the most varied action, and his profound analysis of temperament and motive is entangled in every one of these early novels with that intricate and artificial contrivance called a plot.

The novelist, like the painter, has to produce a counterfeit of reality out of materials far more limited than those which reality itself can draw upon. It is impossible to imitate the vivid glow of sunshine in a medium only visible because a faint reflected beam shines back from it. And human life, in its force, complexity, and duration, vanquishes as completely all that the novelist can present of it as light vanquishes colour. At once, therefore, there arises for the novelist the problem how to accommodate his limited scale of means to the prototype, virtually unlimited in power and resource, to which, whether as comment or copy, his work is to be related. If the sun is to shine in your picture, you must hide by shadow much that in a real landscape would be shadowed, but not hidden. Unless your novel is to be a mere procession, the characters must be bound together by a cobweb of coincidences to which life happily affords no parallel. The safest and perhaps the most essentially artistic solution of these problems is the frank acceptance of a conventional system of elimination, the only fault of which is that it may so simplify the matter as to put art in danger at the hands of trickery—the fault of the Japanese. The great humanist shrinks instinctively from circumscribing his work with obvious restrictions, and even from acknowledging those that are an essential part of it. Meredith's object, certainly, is to produce an illusion of life, and not that only, but of life intense, heightened, life grappling with decisive issues, tested in the struggle and revealed by it. He wishes, moreover, to produce the illusion in order that he may pass judgment thereupon and so affect the course of the reality. He

desires to entertain, both that he may himself be entertained and that he may have readers; but since the vital fact about these readers is that they are men, endowed, as such, with consciences and wills, he claims their recognition of what is that he may wring the admission from them of what ought to be.

In brief, Meredith is not content unless the novel, as it comes from his hands, serves every end in turn. It must be at once romantic, realistic, idealistic. The fullness of life must be reflected in it, the inner secrets, the hidden depths, must be searchingly portrayed. The scheme is colossal, and one might assume without resort to evidence that it was not to be realised in perfect works of art. The flaw which most consistently reveals itself in these early novels is caused by an imperfect fusion of psychology and plot. A plot, as we saw, is necessarily composed of improbabilities; and there are, of course, whole tribes of improbabilities which in no way task the credence of a discerning reader. A complete distinction is allowed between facts as life must order them and facts as they may be ordered in the novel. But fiction, if it is freed in one way, is tied in another; for it devolves upon the characters, in proportion to the clearness with which they are revealed to us, to act characteristically. Now, human characters, acting characteristically, produce life; they do not produce a plot. And the more an author complicates his threads and indulges his own and his readers' taste for mystery and adventure, the likelier will he be to fix the persons of his drama in positions from which the only escape open to them is one which character forbids them to take. Meredith's psychological insight is supreme. The springs of impulse are laid bare by him, the determining features of personality weighed, analysed, and adjusted with so secure a touch, that the man whom he chooses to make a man for us carries with him to the end the incubus of complete individuality; we read his actions in the light of our knowledge of his character. We know Richard Feverel far too well to allow that he could have deserted his young wife under the circumstances alleged, and the ensuing tragedy seems merciless because, in the preliminaries, our credulity has been overstrained. The turning-point of Dahlia Fleming's fate shows the same error still more incontestably Not only is the scoundrel Sedgett two persons, for a convenience of plot combined in one, but Rhoda's character also is suspended, thwarted even, that the knot may be tied. The greatest scenes of the book are in reserve; but we have caught sight of the strings behind the curtain, and the puppets never again completely live; or rather, to use a truer metaphor, they live still, crying out upon their traducer in helpless protest against the false destiny to which he impels them. The impetuous rush of *Vittoria* and all the brilliant intriguing (with never a maid-servant or a donkey-driver but carries a kingdom's fate in handkerchief or wallet) is built from the start upon a flagrant violation of the heroine's character; and a score of less prominent instances might be quoted.

Two subtler and more pervasive errors are noticeable in the same connection. The novel of adventure can certainly be a delightful thing; the novel in which human creatures display their humanity is as certainly

concerned with nobler issues. Meredith's greatness is in the depth and breadth of his hold upon humanity; but he fails, in his sportive intervals, to observe what is due to his moments of culminating seriousness. Profound insight carries obligations; *noblesse oblige*. Waiting at Meredith's door there is at all times a four-in-hand with horses pawing the ground, and in a trice he will be upon the box, giving them whip and rein. Life has room for this, and what is more exhilarating than to inhale the keen air to the sound of clattering hoofs along the road? But once Meredith is in his place, there is no trusting him; he is off like Phaethon; break-neck speed is not good enough; he must jump walls and swim rivers; he goes distraught with the dash and rattle of the chase—while the life which he has himself revealed turns a sober eye upon the performance and finds it hollow. The humanity of his own creations puts another restraint upon him which again he does not always recognise. It is impossible to touch a human life closely without taking up a bond of reverence and tenderness which even in fiction can be betrayed. The novelist has a wide licence, but the more his characters live the more he is likely to wrong and injure them by any cold arraignment or by allowing himself to be seen as a miniature Providence who judges and sits aloof. There is, in fact, this danger attendant upon the introduction of "philosophy" into a novel, that while a truth is being enunciated a loyalty may be overlooked. Meredith is wonderfully impartial in the judgments he metes out, and his philosophy of human nature, as illustrated in his fiction and distilled in his poetry, is perhaps the finest monument of his genius. But, although his first novel showed the wreckage of a life driven before a theory, his work has faults of taste, making it doubtful whether the truth he taught in *Richard Feverel* was appreciated by him in its bearing upon his art.

Harry Richmond is conceived and its principal features executed upon so stupendous a scale that its inclusion among novels of the first period may seem arbitrary. But Meredith is not among those writers the progress of whose work is marked by increase in the scale of their conceptions. The character of Roy Richmond is perhaps his masterpiece—Roy is the sublimity of the ridiculous itself, and its sublimity includes its pathos—but the book is essentially a product of the spirit of youthfulness, and its hero, who is not Harry, is the supreme driver of the coach-and-four—let us say rather, its immortal team. Roy gave so generous an outlet to the floods of fantasy that one should have been able to count on freedom, in the remainder of the book, from restless fretting against the tyranny of normality in the actions and capacities of the average man. But the author's notion would seem to have been that the plot of a book in which Roy was to figure must be as impulsive and inconsequential as he is; and so a sequence of incredibilities is woven around the head of a young man of whom we remain convinced that nothing but what was strictly credible could ever have befallen him, the whole in needless sacrifice to a character at whose approach the Incredible itself becomes established fact.

Meredith's defects have a peculiar fascination for the critic because

of the genius that lies behind them. And they are, in every case, what is best to be described as residuary; for in so describing them we are enabled to recognise the conditions under which they fall away. His treatment of plot, character, incident, language, is liable to be knotted, spasmodic, kaleidoscopic, heterogeneous, and as a consequence rough or obscure, whenever he is at work in a context by the direct issues of which his attention is only partially engaged. These very failings have, of course, their attendant virtue; for there is no page of his writing of which one could assume to say that it was unilluminated by poetry, and gems flash like dew from a spider's web in the midst of his most wayward disquisitions. But the chief enemy of his art was the super-abundance of his resources. In proportion as the issues intensify, his nature knits itself, simplifies itself, to meet them, so that, when the great moment arrives and the supreme effort is claimed, his response is faultless. Of the novels of this first period, *Evan Harrington*, which is artistically the least imperfect, is at the same time the least significant. Every one of the rest, with whatever criticisms we may assail their versatility and brilliance, crushes us in the end by its overwhelming display of power and beauty.

BASIL DE SÉLINCOURT.

L'AGE DANGEREUX. By KARIN MICHAËLIS. (Translated by MARCEL PRÉVOST.)

This is a work which may be pithily described as a sex betrayal. It is characteristic of the age, of the Women's Movement, the fruit of that mental unrest which has fallen upon modern feminine civilization. Christianity, no doubt, is responsible for the "mystery" enveloping women, as it is for the sex legacy of virginity and chastity and what is generally known as the inscrutability of the feminine soul. To-day women seem to be growing tired of this sacrosanct mystery, and in this book a woman has laid bare her soul in a way that she admits herself to be disloyal and a betrayal. The veil is torn down. She offers herself and her sex—to be understood. She reveals what only doctors know about her sex, tells it frankly, brutally, like a man.

Having married for wealth, at the age of 40 she finds herself in love with a man some years younger, and flies from both—from the husband she does not love, from the lover for fear of her approaching decline. She takes a little house on an island, and for a year tries to accommodate herself to the contemplative life. *L'age dangereux* is too strong for her. She sends for the lover. He comes, looks at her lost youth, and leaves the same night; then, in despair, she sends for her husband. But he is about to marry again—a girl of 19. She is no longer "wanted." This is a feminine book which will be read by women with mixed feelings of horror and interest. Incidentally the writer reveals many of women's most treasured secrets—the language of their smile, their inability to grasp the truth, to admit realities, their whole education in the art of

artificiality and subterfuge. Man and woman, says the author, are further apart than a "stone and a young plant." She admits that sex is the predominant feature in their life, as opposed to the illusion, so fiercely fought for by women, of the soul. She is not a suffragette. She is that common being—an unhappy woman of 40. She has done that most uncommon thing—written a confession which amounts to a sex revelation.

NONSENSE NOVELS. By STEPHEN LEACOCK. John Lane.

Luckily, people's sense of humour differs so that some are tickled beyond words by a joke which will not even raise a smile in others. Professor Leacock says in his preface to this, his second amusing book, that "as professor in political economy in a great university" he "admits he ought to know better." There I quite agree with him. But, since he has found a publisher, it is clear there must be some whose "funny bone" is in the same place as his own. I "speaks as I finds," and to me, at least, his nonsense is not amusing; it is merely stupid and dull. His attempts at parody seem to me without point or wit. Wit must flow naturally and spontaneously. True wit is at once the most inspired and the most rare of gifts, and to amuse is the most difficult of all the arts. Professor Leacock seems to have strenuously made up his mind to be "frivolous at any cost," and to have failed in the attempt. But his humility disarms criticism, for he says he will be content "if there are any to whom this little book may bring some pleasing amusement in hours of idleness, or some brief respite when sadness of the heart or the sufferings of the body forbid the perusal of worthier things."

The intention is so excellent that, among the many who will read his book, no doubt he will knock against his humorous affinity.

LE MÉTIER DU ROI. By COLLETTE YVER. Calmann-Lévy.

This is a most interesting story. Beautifully written and convincingly told, it holds the imagination from the first page to the last.

We are taken right to the heart of things, and made to feel the deepest emotions of all the people. It is a novel which every Socialist and all revolutionaries ought to read. The story opens at a scientific demonstration, given by a woman chemist, who, like Madame Curie, has made a great discovery. In drawing the character of Mlle. Hersberg the authoress has done more for her sex than if she had written a suffrage pamphlet. Quite simply, and taking it as a matter of course, she makes of this *femme savante* a fascinating and heroic figure; describes her as beautiful and gentle, and by giving her all the attributes of a noble and great-hearted woman, does away with the old idea that when a woman uses her brains she becomes a "blue-stocking."

Full of the dignity of a free-thinker, who refuses to acknowledge one man's right to govern another, she takes her place in the royal household.

In the King she finds the friend of her heart, and the suggestion that she and he might have loved each other wonderfully is delicately and deliciously touched upon. Little by little she grows to see the weakness of her creed, founded upon the false ideal of "equality." Her struggles are described with remarkable insight, as are those of the King and the Archduchess, who gives her happiness and that of her lover for the good of the people. Mlle. Hersberg eventually marries the King's would-be assassin, who is no other than the fanatical *fiancé* of her youth.

THE GLORY OF CLEMENTINA WING. By WILLIAM J. LOCKE. John Lane.

Mr. Locke must have been very happy when he wrote this story, which is likely to be popular, if only by reason of its sunny optimism. As a piece of art it is artificial enough, and if one compares it, say, with a volume of Turgeniev, the soul of the one is as full as that of the other is empty. Here we must make allowance for our conditions. When one finds an author of Locke's position writing that a man said "blankety blank," meaning that he swore an oath, these conditions under which English authors write are painfully manifest. It imposes upon them artificiality, it divorces them from the realities and moving powers of life. This said, one may praise warmly. In Quixtus, a learned, wealthy, quixotic humanitarian, Mr. Locke has drawn a character after Sterne's heart, and his calvary of evil is delightfully etched in upon the more general theme of love for Clementina Wing, the rugged artist woman, who, though an admirable study, is, from any serious artistic standard, an artificial creation. There is real charm in the book. A pleasing note of half-smiling, half-teasing gaiety runs all through it, and its morality is absolutely up to *The Spectator's* fifth-form standard. It deserves a success, and is quite sure of it. Altogether a pleasing and charming novel.

SAM'S KID. By F. E. MILLS YOUNG. John Lane. 6*s*.

David Grier is the *alias* of a man who has killed another and then disappeared. He is "wanted" for murder, for he alone knows that it was done in self-defence. He has established himself, when this story commences, as Sam's partner in a bone-mill on the veldt. Sam's Kid, the girl whom Sam adopted for love of her dead mother, and Grier fall in love. The villain of the piece, the overseer of a neighbouring farm, discovers Grier's identity, and threatens the girl that he will reveal it, except on one condition. She consents in order to save Grier's life, and then finds in Grier's looks, when he discovers it, that his love has been ousted. Eventually she marries Sam, who has loved her ever since he first saw her.

This is the kernel of the plot, but there are numerous other complications, which are not always quite convincing. At times we seem to get behind the scenes and see the author manipulating. But, for the most

part, it is a full-blooded story—such as we have learnt to associate with South Africa—and it is written without shirking any difficulty, and yet with decency. The few characters are drawn with care, and there is some quality in the atmosphere of the veldt, as rendered by Miss Young, which almost reconciles us to the extreme simplicity with which they implicate themselves in difficulties. Perhaps Miss Young's greatest achievement is to have made the extraordinary musical genius of Sam's Kid both convincing and attractive.

ESSAYS AND GENERAL LITERATURE

MYSTICISM: A STUDY IN THE NATURE AND DEVELOPMENT OF MAN'S SPIRITUAL CONSCIOUSNESS. By EVELYN UNDERHILL. Methuen. 15*s.* net.

No book on this subject so complete and philosophically exact as Miss Underhill's has before been written in the English language. She has done much more than state the position of individual mystics and criticise the more recent authorities. Her book is constructive in the sense that she has taken the lives and the recorded experiences of the mystics as her material, and upon that basis has built up an account of the mystic processes and the mystic consciousness. Mysticism is for her a department of the universal life of the human soul; it is a way of approaching and apprehending the truth; and because truth is one, the experiences of the mystics correspond one with another.

If it were only that she had given a definite meaning to the term her book would be of value. It is not with her a loose expression connoting the poetic impulse; it has nothing to do with empirical spiritualism or "magic," or any of the arts or sciences which are pursued in the interests of anything else, whether knowledge or gain. Mysticism is "the expression of the innate tendency of the human spirit towards complete harmony with the transcendental order." It has nothing to do with philosophy, or intellectual apprehension, nor is it dogmatic theology; it does not give an account of the universe; it is not, like metaphysics, a "map" or "diagram" of human knowledge. It is in itself direct, disinterested experience; it is intuitional; it is an experience not in the plane of normal sensible experience, but, on the contrary, becoming richer in proportion as the sensible world ceases to clog the aspiring spirit. The mystic seeks to transcend the world of sense, and by discipline prepare himself for visions of the Absolute, and ultimately for union with the Absolute.

Her mystics are the saints, saints such as Saint Catherine of Siena, Saint Catherine of Genoa, Saint Francis of Assisi, or such men and women as Walter Hylton, the Lady Julian of Norwich, or Boehme. Among these and others like them—she does not exclude Oriental mystics of Mohammedan or Buddhistic persuasion—she finds common experiences. First there is the search for the Principle of Unity, that which lies behind

all, the distant yet all-producing Absolute; but when that seems too remote and chilly, that inexplicable "somewhat" becomes individual and personal, an object of love, the second Person in the Trinity. And she describes the experiences of the mystics, the processes of the "Mystic Way"; the awakening to a new consciousness, the process of "Purgation," the state of "Illumination," the negative condition known as the "Dark Night of the Soul," and finally the goal, the stage of "Mystic Union."

There is a curious erotic language employed by the mystics. One notes it particularly in Saint Catherine of Genoa and in Julian of Norwich, though it must be remembered that in using the language of sense they are taken as speaking symbolically of that which cannot be expressed in terms of ordinary experience. One must also note the curious pathology of many of the mystics; they appeared often to be comatose in their trances, they suffered the extremities of ill-health. Miss Underhill hardly discusses the question of hallucination, of illusion, of error induced by physical causes; though where such things are evident she would probably dismiss them as cases not properly mystical. This too-ready acceptance of the evidence of the mystics, as given by themselves, is the weakness of her book. The strongest evidence in favour of the great mystics is that in spite of their extraordinary physical infirmities, their appalling nervous trials, they remained often, like Catherine of Siena, unflinching, prodigies of energy, even practical reformers on a large scale. But even so, in reading of their experiences, it is well to remember the experiences of De Quincey, which in the Middle Ages would have borne a supramundane significance.

We have read Miss Underhill's book with exceptional interest. For long it is likely to be the standard work on this subject.

THE RENAISSANCE OF THE NINETIES. By W. G. BLAIKIE MURDOCH. London: Alexander Moring, Ltd. 1*s*. 6*d*. net.

Literary history wants a book on the "Nineties," but we cannot say that this little book, which runs to barely eighty pages, is very successful in explaining the campaigns of *The Yellow Book* and *The Savoy*, the wonderful decade that gave us the poetry of Ernest Dowson and Arthur Symons, the drawings of Beardsley and Conder. Mr. Murdoch explains the movement as a return to "the Renaissance of Wonder" (by which over-worked phrase he invariably alludes to the poetic revolution from Blake to Wordsworth), and for this purpose he has to pretend that the preceding years of the Victorian period had been a sort of desert, in which may still be traced the unprofitable wanderings of a few Romantics. This leads to the remark that "Tennyson wrote the majority of his best poems in the reign of William IV.," and next we find Ruskin classed with Kingsley as a producer of "sorry moralisings," characteristic of the period. Mr. Murdoch has a word of praise for the "brilliant Chelsea group," a phrase which apparently includes Rossetti, Swinburne, Morris and Meredith; but treats them all as

beautiful Romantics hopelessly remote from life. We wonder how long men will go on praising Rossetti for all his poems except the best of them, and whether any critic of poetry might not be judged by his appreciation of *Jenny*. Mr. Murdoch seeks to establish the thesis that the common inspiration of all the young writers and painters of the Nineties, their distinguishing value, was the fact that "they scouted the obviously beautiful, the palpably romantic, and dealt instead with the actual circumstances of their lives." It is characteristic of his critical method that he instances the stage-door poems of Arthur Symons, the *London Visions* of Mr. Binyon, John Davidson's *Fleet-Street Eclogues*, Sickert's music-hall interiors, and some picture of a sunlit lawn by Sir James Guthrie; but forgets Yeats, Beardsley, the drawings of Laurence Housman, and Conder. When he comes to the question of influences, he notes correctly that Verlaine was as powerful as any, but hardly emphasises the fact. He might have noticed that all Arthur Symons' early poems are not indeed imitations of Verlaine, but attempts to achieve in English emotional effects produced by Verlaine in French. A French influence dominated the movement, for there was about the young men of *The Yellow Book* and *The Savoy* a certain Parisian enthusiasm in the pursuit of art. With what gay sincerity they proceeded, sufficiently applauded by the orotund abuse of the bourgeois! (We wonder, by the way, if Mr. Owen Seaman would care to be reminded of his bitter attack on Aubrey Beardsley.)

But was their choice of subjects from their actual environment, a regarding of all circumstances as equally suitable for artistic treatment —a return to life—was this attitude, as Mr. Murdoch argues, really characteristic? We believe their creed was rather the artistic equivalence, not of all subjects, but of all emotions. They were, philosophically, a school of introspective artists. It was not that any subject was worthy of reproduction, but that any personal emotion, however fleeting, was worthy and capable of artistic expression.

Mr. Murdoch's essay is valuable only as a record of names and dates; he usually begs the question he is trying to prove by means of incidental criticisms which stimulate nothing but violent contradiction ("Swinburne," says he, "was ever a cheerful singer"). He splits an incredible number of infinitives, and he refers to Laurence Hope in a rhapsody of metaphors that deserves immortality.

OXFORD AND POETRY IN 1911. By T. HERBERT WARREN, M.A., HON. D.C.L. Oxford: At the Clarendon Press. 1*s.* net.

In his Inaugural Lecture as Professor of Poetry the President of Magdalen opens with an interesting review of his predecessors in the Chair and of some of the traditions of its acceptance. It is tantalising to note that in 1867 Robert Browning was a probable successor to Matthew Arnold, and but for the difficulty of hurrying him into an honorary degree in time for the nomination would almost certainly have been elected. The President of Magdalen points out that since the Chair was founded,

exactly two hundred years ago, the field has been encroached upon by other lecturers; our modern professors of Greek and Latin definitely combine literature with scholarship. It is therefore a little disappointing to find that after a review of poets and poetry in connection with Oxford down to the death of Swinburne he refuses to name any of the present generation. A pronouncement *ex cathedra* on the poets of to-day might have shown that the academic critic no longer deserves the reproach of neglecting the present. But he is afraid to commit himself to anything but a little discreet encouragement. That poets must not expect to make money is a commonplace, he says, as old as Ovid. Forgetting Ovid's story of Arion (who, on that eventful return to Sicily when the dolphin so distinguished itself, *quaesitas arte ferebat opes*), he quotes *Maeonides nullas ipse reliquit opes*—"even Homer left no fortune," or, as I suppose we ought to put it, to be up-to-date, the syndicate for promoting the rise of the Greek Epic did not pay its shareholders.

THE SHAKESPEARE REVIVAL AND THE STRATFORD-UPON-AVON MOVEMENT. By REGINALD R. BUCKLEY, MARY NEAL, ARTHUR HUTCHINSON, and F. R. BENSON. With 16 Full-page Illustrations. George Allen & Sons. 3*s.* 6*d.* net.

MUSIC-DRAMA OF THE FUTURE. Uther and Igraine. By RUTLAND BOUGHTON and REGINALD R. BUCKLEY. William Reeves. 2*s.* net.

Mr. Buckley being the connecting link between these two books, it is perhaps to Mr. Buckley we should look for a unity of idea between them. And the unity that evolves itself on reading both books is an inspiration towards a kind of Bayreuth theatre to be founded in England (preferably in Stratford), where not only should drama, strictly so-called, be continually enacted, but where that lofty form of opera called music-drama should also have its place and performance. The idea is held by him as something more than a fancy for the world of dreams; he is apparently a keen propagandist for its realisation. There is no room in so short a notice as this for a detailed examination of the idea; but it may be said in passing that Mr. Buckley is surely overlooking such very important difficulties as the question of acoustics, for example. The recent experiment in New York has proved that the sharp cataclysm and conflict necessary to drama is absolutely lost in any hall sufficiently adapted for holding comfortably the combined orchestral and vocal volume of sound that is demanded by music-drama. Apart from a complete overlooking of such difficulties, the books certainly prompt a variety of questions that need ventilation; such as the future for drama and choral-drama, not to speak of the future for Stratford-on-Avon, which is apt to become an echo of ancient things. The weak point in both volumes is their lack of resolute criticism. The authors are inclined to embrace too much, and therefore to set up a somewhat confused ideal. Yet perhaps it is wise that the exploitation of the idea is the first thing, with criticism to follow after as a necessary rectification.

BOOK NOTICES

HIGHWAYS AND HEDGES. Painted by BERENGER BENGER. Described by HERBERT A. MORRAH. A. & C. Black. *7s. 6d.* net.

The title of this book is a misnomer. It should have been "Essays on Literature, Religion, Art, and Economics, by Herbert A. Morrah, with some beautiful illustrations in colour of highways and hedges by Berenger Benger." Not that we object to Mr. Morrah's amiable philosophy, nor quarrel with his outlook on life and literature generally. Indeed, we rather like them; but we took the book out of doors on a hot summer day in the hope of wandering into the heart of rural England on the intimation of the publishers that "as soon as the book is opened one is knee-deep among the daisies." The statement, delightfully true as far as the painter is concerned, is tiresomely inaccurate as far as the describer is concerned. We never get to any specific highway; we never look into a real hedgerow. We wander aimlessly and vaguely about a country the author calls the Southern Belt of England. As he pertinently remarks: "These potentialities . . . by no means easy for the mere dealer in words to seize. Their true inwardness can be better expressed by the brush of the painter." So it is left to the painter to show us the shadowed roadway at eventide with sheep under high elms backed by blue distances; to show us hedges gorgeous with traveller's joy and briony; to show us spring lighting up the barks of oaks and deepening the purple of the underwood. Occasionally, the poet in Mr. Morrah compels from him an illuminating phrase such as "While against the sky flushed up for rain, the very twigs are trembling with desire for the ampler life which every drop of that moisture will bring"; but it is the painter who has in this book worked consistently and successfully with the vision of the poet.

BIOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

MY LIFE. By RICHARD WAGNER. (Two vols.) Constable & Co., Ltd.

If as a book of revelation this long-expected autobiography of Wagner proves a little disappointing, as a document of the life of perhaps the greatest artistic genius of the last century it is extraordinarily interesting and stimulating. There are many omissions, many things one would have liked to hear more about, and it ends with Wagner in the haven, at last, of financial independence. But what a life of energy, of battle, of sheer creative force! This is the salient note of his life—a superb, indomitable fight.

The aureole of genius shines throughout upon his career. There is the youth, who never wielded a sword in his life, recklessly challenging the three notorious duellists at the University without fear or thought; there is the young gambler; there is Wagner the lover, and always Wagner the fighter. The reading of this battle is a tremendous moral lesson. He could not pander. Even when successful he would never give Meyerbeer's "*dîners de la veille*" to the critics, and the result was the systematic hostility of the Press all through his life. In England there stands on

record the villainous hostility of Mr. Davison, critic of the *Times*, who assailed Wagner with all the venom at his command. In Berlin the Court Theatre remained closed to him. In Paris the brutal power of the "Jockeys" howled his operas down. Think of *Tannhäuser* howled down by a fury of noisy clubmen as ignorant of music as is a monkey to a barrel-organ! Yet the man fought on. However, he had real friends, Liszt, the Bülows, and, in many ways, the artists generally of the world. The effect of this work is both depressing and exhilarating. On the one side the stupendous ignorance, vindictiveness, supineness, of the critics, of the mob, of the Princes and all who had the power of patronage towards this wonderful man; on the other, the man's single-handed struggle and ultimate triumph, surging above them all like the great ride of the Walkyrie March. He tried in vain to get Napoleon interested in his *Tannhäuser;* indeed the story of his struggles for bare existence in Paris is one of the most interesting episodes on record. Compare the honours accorded nowadays to Strauss with the ignorant hostility meted out to Wagner! There is consolation in the reflection: when next such a genius arrives he will not have to fight as Wagner did. That is the message to humanity of this life. It has been attacked for its personalities. In reality that is one of its merits. We have the i's dotted. All that is right, and it makes the book historically interesting as a record of human nature.

EIGHT CENTURIES OF PORTUGUESE MONARCHY. By V. DE BRAGANÇA CUNHA. Stephen Swift. 15*s.* net.

There is, of course, but a very slight difference between the history of monarchy and the general history of a kingdom. For this reason the scope of Mr. de Bragança Cunha's book is necessarily wide, and includes many men and matters that are concerned only indirectly with the dynasty itself. Nevertheless, in his lucid and comprehensive work, the author has successfully retained the thread of the story of the long line of Portuguese kings, and has grouped the events of each period about the contemporary tenant of the throne. In the earlier chapters the task is naturally simple and straightforward; but the chronicle of the most recent vicissitudes of the land affords a sufficiently hard nut for even the boldest historian to crack. Nevertheless, Mr. de Bragança Cunha approaches his subject with no little confidence. His views may not be shared by all his readers; but they are at all events perfectly straightforward and most commendably unbiased. There are numerous portraits, some of which are very bad.

MEMOIRS AND MEMORIES. By MRS. C. W. EARLE. Smith, Elder & Co. 10*s.* 6*d.* net.

In a dedicatory introduction to this, her latest work, Mrs. Earle explains how much of the material for the book came into her hands, and, commenting on the letters passing between members of the Villiers

and Liddell families (many of which are reproduced here), she says:—"What I did find was a series of human documents, revelations of character and of old-fashioned sentiment, and pathetic details of partings and deaths. I was startled to realise the great changes that have occurred even in my lifetime with regard to all the manners and customs which are the very warp and woof of our lives. . . ." And the spirit breathed by those "human documents," the ways and customs of a vanished generation, are set forth here—the Victorian age is set before us of the twentieth century, that we may compare it with our own.

Though so short a distance, in actual time, away, that Victorian age is already so remote as to be only a memory, rather than an experience, to this present generation, for we have little time to realise its manners and moods. Few people, of those who remain from that time, are better qualified to tell of its interests than Mrs. Earle. She lived a full, active life; she was in touch with events of her day and with people in the public eye; she had not only opportunities for the acquisition of material, but the skill to use them, and the result is a book of real, personal interest, rather bulky, perhaps, but Victorian in manner and spirit, and a faithful presentment of society and its ways in the time when Du Maurier was drawing for *Punch*; the book is in some way suggestive of his earlier drawings, and in reading it one seems in close touch with the men and women of the seventies and eighties, whose dress and deportment he has preserved for us.

At times the authoress is meticulously accurate. Surely it was unnecessary to explain that Blondin acquired his fame through tight-rope walking across Niagara; this as an instance. But there are few points at which to cavil, and many which call for praise. One who has had her share of the world's good, and who has enjoyed; who has had her share, also, of trials and difficulties, and borne them bravely, tells here of the people she has known and the world that was before this twentieth century dawned. In reading, one feels that she has made good use of her life, and has told its story well.

Among the four illustrations which the book contains are two excellent reproductions of pencil sketches by G. F. Watts; the drawing of Mrs. Earle's mother is especially worthy of note as an artistic addition to an interesting work.

POETRY

MORE PEERS. Verses by H. BELLOC. Pictures by B.T.B. London: Stephen Swift. 2*s.* 6*d.* net.

Mr. Belloc's verses are as good, and "B.T.B.'s" pictures certainly better, than ever. Both of them seem to be just as young as they were about fifteen years ago, when "The Bad Child's Book of Beasts" first leaped blithely from the Bocardo Press at Oxford. "B.T.B." has the unique gift, for one whose powers of drawing are confessedly limited, of representing any situation by the facial expression of his characters.

He is a modern Hogarth, neglecting scenic details for the study of face and feature; and his vivid physiognomies condemn a whole society.

We are only given twelve peers in this book, but, if Mr. Belloc is to be biographer, we could easily do with five hundred.

MIRAGE: POEMS by DOUGLAS AINSLIE. Elkin Mathews. 3*s.* 6*d.* net.

Mr. Ainslie clearly has a theory about rhyming, and, we suspect, a bad one. "Steady" and "shed she," "chosen" and "close then," "treasure" and "together," etc., may possibly be justified upon some curious theory of the function of consonants in rhyme, but we can imagine no justification for "comfortable" and "trouble" or for "steward" and "conjured." Apart from this we find little of note in the poems. There is a good supply of legendary lore, but not very much thought or emotion. "A Friend in Need," which occupies nearly sixty pages, shows that Mr. Ainslie can tell a story which will hold the attention. These are two lines, however—

> A pair as fair as *be* and as *her*
> You would have sought in vain

(the italics are our own) which positively distract us.

WISHING WOOD AND OTHER VERSES. By AGNES S. FALCONER. London: A. C. Fifield. 1*s.* net.

Mr. Fifield is becoming the minor poets' publisher in ordinary, it seems; and he does it very nicely in the "Grey Boards Series."

Miss Falconer writes about "Lavender" and "Sir Redbreast" and "Lilac and Throstle," and about "The Shilfa'," presumably something Scotch which also sits "on the lilac spray"; and about "Violets":

> All of our secret sorrows
> That are clear of sin and hate,
> Watered with tears and hedged with fears,
> And guarded early and late—
> They are changed into violets, violets,
> When they fall at the Heavenly Gate.

But she is not always as poignant as that.

SONGS BY THE WAY. By MARGARET BLAIKIE. London: A. C. Fifield. 1*s.* net.

Miss Blaikie is more earnestly religious than Miss Falconer, and runs easily to Christian allegory and titles like "Not by Bread Alone." She should be remembered as the author of a sonnet beginning:

> "EPHPHATHA, be thou opened!" So Love spoke.

Although every precaution is taken, the Proprietor will not be responsible for the loss of, or damage or any other accidents that may occur to, the manuscripts that may be sent in for consideration.

THE ENGLISH REVIEW

AND

THE SPECTATOR

WE, the undersigned, have read the article in *The Spectator* of June 10th attacking THE ENGLISH REVIEW. We can see nothing in the article but a simple act of persecution. A well-known writer in THE ENGLISH REVIEW has expressed, not editorially, but over his own signature and on his own responsibility, an opinion which is beyond all question a very widespread opinion, not only among so-called men of the world, but among medical men and serious moralists. It is an opinion which shocked some of us precisely as some of *The Spectator's* opinions shock others of us and shock the Editor of THE ENGLISH REVIEW. But its suppression can be justified only by arguments which would equally justify the suppression of every organ of advanced or reactionary thought in Europe, and could easily be pushed for party or sectarian purposes to the destruction of the liberty of the Press. Under these circumstances, without in any way committing ourselves as to the merits of the two journals, or the validity of the views with which they are identified, we feel bound to protest against the attempt of *The Spectator* to annul the compact of tolerance upon which the maintenance of the highest literature and the best journalism depends for its very existence.

THOMAS HARDY
BERNARD SHAW
ARNOLD BENNETT
H. G. WELLS
JOHN GALSWORTHY
WILLIAM SOMERSET MAUGHAM
HERBERT TRENCH
W. H. DAVIES
EDEN PHILLPOTTS
W. J. LOCKE
FORD MADOX HUEFFER
T. STURGE MOORE
MAY SINCLAIR
FRANCIS GRIERSON
H. GRANVILLE BARKER
VIOLET HUNT
SIDNEY LOW
F. G. BLAKESLEY
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RICHARD WHITEING
J. FORBES-ROBERTSON
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HUGH WALPOLE
EDGAR JEPSON
MORLEY ROBERTS
CHARLES MARRIOTT
J. STUART HAY
W. H. KOEBEL
G. H. MAIR
DARRELL FIGGIS
J. E. EVANS-JACKSON
ALFRED STEAD
YOSHIO MARKINO
E. S. P. HAYNES
A. L. HAYDON
W. BARNES STEVENS
PERCY W. AMES

* Mr. Maurice Hewlett signs the Protest with the following reserving clause:

> I agree with and join in the protest against *The Spectator's* article with this modification of its terms, that I do not suppose it to have been an act of persecution. I regard it as having been inspired by that smug confidence in one's own opinion and conviction of its importance to the world at large, which are still, as they have always been, common to all vulgar natures. *The Spectator* is not malevolent; it is a prig.